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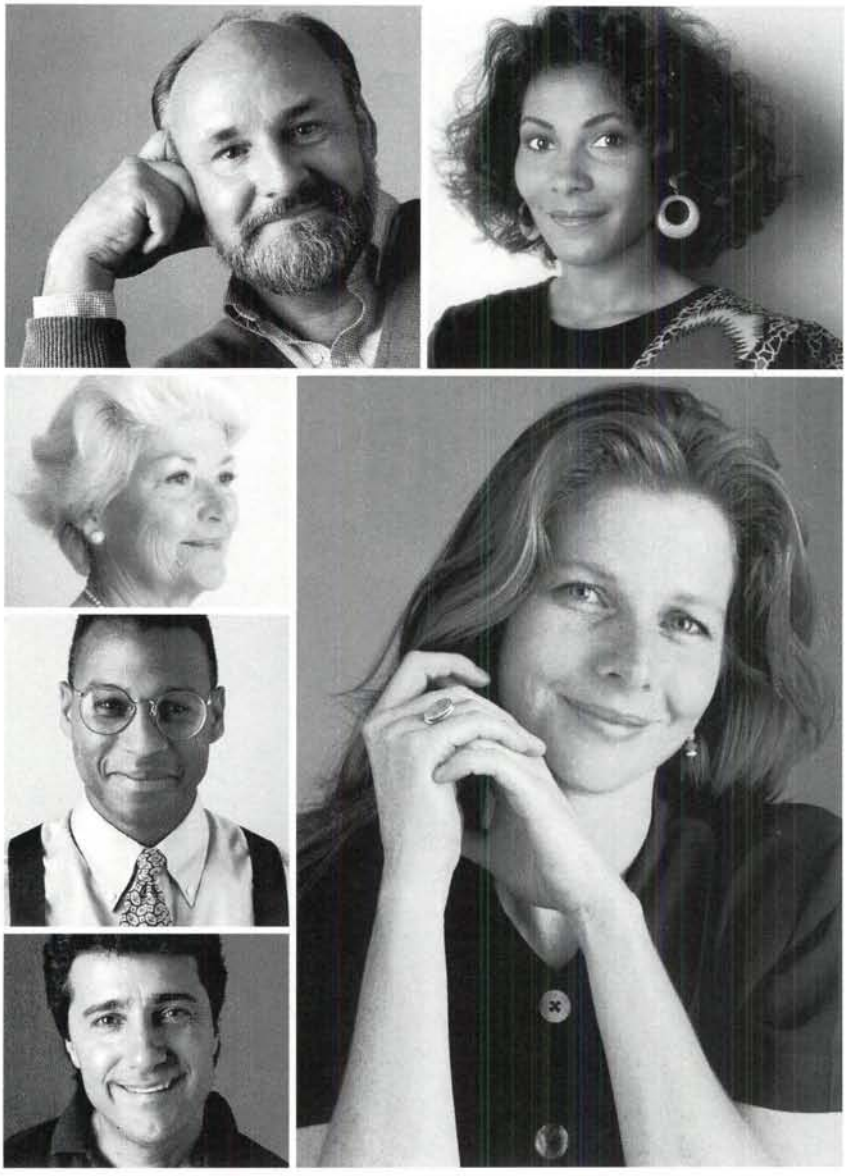

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

NOVEMBER 14, 1994

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CORRESPONDENCE

Master builder

To the editors:

In Ruth Shalit's article on Builders for Peace ("Honeymoon in Gaza," October 10), facts are wrong, events and quotes are distorted or fabricated, and adjectives, adverbs and verbs are used throughout to pejoratively mischaracterize behavior or attitudes. None of these alleged occurrences was even checked with the principals of Builders for Peace.

Shalit attributes quotes to me (through anonymous third-hand sources) that are inaccurate, defamatory and malicious. Other quotes attributed to me from a September 9 press conference are also clearly inaccurate, as a check of the C-SPAN tape of the briefing will show. Shalit's depiction of her visit to my office library is also pure fabrication. Contrary to the impression she sought to convey, I proudly showed her a shelf of Palestinian/PLO monographs, and I do not even own an "anthology of Jewish-American women writers."

Finally, Shalit and *The New Republic* saved their worst ammunition for the Arab Americans involved. For several years TNR has taken mean swipes at Arab Americans while touting its own anti-Palestinian position. It appears that Shalit's story was guided by this cynical anti-Palestinian mindset rather than journalistic integrity.

JAMES ZOGBY
President, Arab American Institute
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:

Mel Levine, Jim Zogby and Builders for Peace should be congratulated for promoting economic growth and job opportunities in Gaza and the West Bank. But Ruth Shalit takes the opportunity to lampoon instead of presenting serious reporting or even a legitimate critique. Rather than underscoring that the $100 million in construction funds and $168 million in first-year operating funds will create more than 5,000 new jobs, Shalit goes out of her way to belittle these efforts.

She singles out the projects that she can call "glitzy" and fails to mention such other projects as an olive processing plant or a plant that will provide moderately priced furniture. While no one will deny that Gaza needs sewers, roads, waste removal and other infrastructure, these endeavors are more suited for public expenditures rather than private enterprise.

LEO KRAMER
Washington, D.C.

Ruth Shalit replies:

In his melodramatic letter, James Zogby accuses me of fabrications and distortions. Yet he only specifies two—both of which are groundless. First, Zogby accuses me of misquoting him at a White House press conference. And yet the C-SPAN tape, which I've since reviewed, confirms my notes to the word.

Second, there is the matter of Zogby's library. Far from proudly displaying his collection of PLO monographs, Zogby became flustered when he saw me noting down the inflammatory titles (*Whither Israel? A Study of Zionist Expansion*). "Those are the old books," he exclaimed. He then ushered me into his inner office, and pointed to three shelves of less polemical work, including an anthology of Jewish women authors. Whether or not he owns the book, I have no idea.

Paper chase

To the editors:

Lord, if affirmative action didn't exist for your writers to rail against, you'd have to make up a demon to serve the same purpose ("Is Affirmative Action Doomed?" by Jeffrey Rosen, October 17). Cheryl Hopwood and the other three white applicants to the University of Texas Law School weren't denied admission because less-qualified black and Chicano students took their places. Judge Sparks notes that U.T. admitted 109 white students who had lower indices than did Hopwood, who didn't even include an application essay. This number exceeds all the minority students admitted to U.T. for 1992.

TNR ignores the real issue: How can a law school enroll a representative class from among thousands of applicants, virtually all of whom have test scores and academic records that predict success? Very few U.T. (or other) law students, once admitted, fail for academic reasons. But only white applicants feel their rightful place is being taken by less-deserving minority students. There was no displacement here, and no harm. Judge Sparks properly ruled, even while TNR grinds its teeth.

MICHAEL A. OLIVAS
Houston, Texas

To the editors:

I am less than outraged at Jeffrey Rosen's report about admissions procedures at the University of Texas Law School. Both white and minority applicants are rated according to LSAT scores. The "A" in LSAT stands for aptitude, not achievement. The test is meant to predict an individual's success in law school using tricky logic problems, not to report on an individual's merit by testing knowledge. In fact, the testing service makes a point of telling students that the test is of immutable abilities, so you shouldn't bother trying to prepare for it.

That a law school is giving preference to some applicants based on an accident of birth is not news. That it is attempting to give a preference based on an accident of birth that tends to confer a disadvantage rather than an advantage is, I think, laudable.

JACKSON WILLIAMS
Oak Park, Illinois

To the editors:

How can Jeffrey Rosen so effectively demolish the legal moorings of affirmative action and its even more tawdry practice—and then suggest salvaging these programs in limited forms? Rosen's own analysis, and those of others in the same issue, illustrate how affirmative action proportionalism is so flawed, confusing and corrupting that the only solution is to end preferences altogether. Indeed, Rosen and the other authors miss the insidious spread of two new justifications for preferences: the "demography-is-destiny" rationale that urges employers to anticipate a future "majority-minority" United States, and the related "business necessity" argument that employers must get culturally attuned to domestic and international ethnic markets by proportionally hiring and promoting people who "look like" those markets.

FREDERICK R. LYNCH
Claremont, California

Food for thought

To the editors:

Dante Ramos's "Losers" article (October 17) reminded me that I used to fill in my school forms with Pennsylvania German for my ethnic group. No one responded at the other end, however.

Not that it mattered that much. One winter we received assistance from the Agriculture Department with Food Stamps, which graduate students could get in the mid-'70s. The counselor seemed genuinely interested in finding us for her mandate not only to offer, but to insist that eligible people use the programs.

The downside of this was that our relatives claimed this food was not as good. So we stopped it after one winter.

LEVI MILLER
Scottdale, Pennsylvania

Cavalier

To the editors:

Mickey Kaus's cavalier attitude toward "mere soldiers" shedding blood in humanitarian interventions is shocking ("Somalia Syndrome," TRB, October 17). TNR is just as obtuse as the rest of the

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media when it tries to argue away the loss of life in Somalia and the prospective loss of life in Haiti. Most Americans instinctively recoil from these losses not only because we know that U.S. interests are not at stake, but also because many of us have friends, family members and neighbors who are servicepeople. The lack of personal stake is glaringly obvious in your articles, in the output of the Washington press corps and in the administration's decisions.

PAUL GREEN
Lafayette, California

To the editors:

I read Mickey Kaus's "Somalia Syndrome" with a sense of salvation. Finally, some perspective. It is not likely that within forty-eight hours of the peaceful landing in Haiti we could have a "debacle," but it's ridiculous, if not impossible, to have the dreaded "mission creep." Yet newsrooms raced to make nebulous comparisons of Somalia and Haiti.

A more appropriate definition of an undefined military mission that was a "debacle" is Ronald Reagan's flawed adventure into Lebanon where some 400 Marines died without saving one child, much less the nation. I don't recall violent media attacks on Reagan's lame excuses or the fact that he never served in combat. Somalia will be the paradigm of a military debacle and not Lebanon, because the so-called liberal media has acquiesced, or is inept, in challenging the Republicans' nonsense. Was there ever really such a thing as the liberal media?

SEAN HUGHES
Metairie, Louisiana

Special treatment

To the editors:

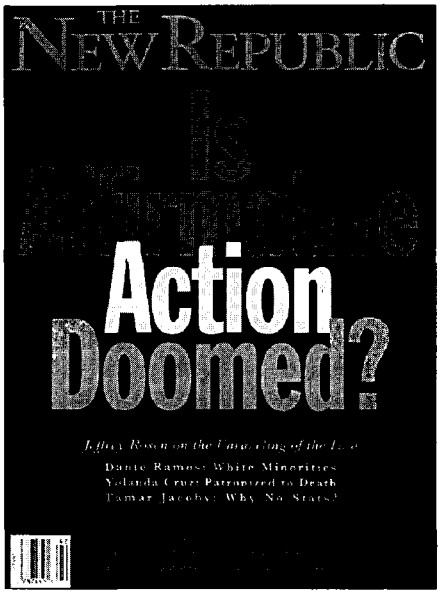
"The Other Drug War" (The Editors, October 17) is a distorted, inaccurate and facile caricature of an important and complex debate. When AIDS activists "seized control" of the FDA in 1988, we demanded faster review of new AIDS drugs, earlier access to promising therapies and better clinical research. Our demands are still much the same, but your article reduces these efforts to a disingenuous good guy-bad guy drama.

Accelerated approval is one tool that has helped people with HIV gain access to promising but unproven AIDS therapies. But earlier access is only the first step. People with HIV need information from well-designed clinical studies to make informed treatment decisions. Access without answers is a false promise.

Accelerated approval has its glitches. Take the first accelerated approval, AZT-DDC combination therapy in June 1992. To determine if the combination actually helps people with HIV, the FDA required seven follow-up studies from the sponsoring company. Two of these studies were never started, another suggested the combination may be worse than a single agent and the rest were small studies. AIDS activists raised this problem with the FDA commissioner in December 1993. The company has now initiated a follow-up program.

Drug companies haven't made "huge" profits off AIDS, but the sales figures in your article are annual, not cumulative. Two hundred million dollars' worth of AZT is sold each year in the United States, $350 million worldwide. AZT may not be a billion-dollar blockbuster, but it isn't chump change.

Finally, your article gratuitously attacks the Treatment Action Group, the only



community-based AIDS organization focused exclusively on research issues, which is a hard-working, intelligent, effective and compassionate response to the AIDS crisis.

DEREK LINK
Gay Men's Health Crisis Inc.
New York, New York

Brecht is back

To the editors:

With all respect to Robert Brustein, I find it difficult to reconcile his opening plaudits for John Fuegi's 732-page Brecht-buster with his conclusions ("In the Company of Women," October 10). The first few lines call it "rigorously researched," and "a work of massive scholarship." But once he moves on to what he calls the "conspiracy theory," according to which Brecht's women friends wrote the bulk of his works, he finds that it is "not documented objectively" and will seem of little value to theater scholars.

Here he is right. Other, less authoritative critics have assumed that all Fuegi's assertions are true. They certainly are not, and no amount of what Brustein terms scholarly paraphernalia can prop them up. How the publisher could have accepted so many errors seems inexplicable. For me they invalidate not just the feminist slant but the whole book—and I speak as someone cited as an authority some twenty times.

Brustein also says nothing about the dozen or more foundations that helped to subsidize Fuegi's book. How many of them now feel that they have got their money's worth? And who paid the (surely massive) P.R. bill?

JOHN WILLETT
Manneville, France

Pontificator

To the editors:

Robert Wright's rantings about Pope John Paul II ("Pope on the Ropes," October 3) is based on a factual mistake. The pope is represented at the U.N. not as the superintendent of 108 acres in Rome but as the head of the Catholic Church. In legal terms, it is the Holy See (the bishopric of Rome), not the Vatican City-State which sends and receives ambassadors. Wright may think this is wrong, or that perhaps Billy Graham should also have a U.N. mission, but he doesn't make such an argument.

It should be clear by now that the pope went to the mat in Cairo only on abortion, not on contraception. The net result of the pope's efforts was to get the conference to slow down and think a little more clearly, and deeply, about the issues before it. This Roman Catholic, for one, wouldn't have much use for a pope who did not forcefully say that abortion is a sin and that we in the West are deceiving ourselves when we think otherwise.

MICHAEL SEAN WINTERS
Washington, D.C.

Take my wife

To the editors:

Joseph Smith's descendants should be quite surprised at the description ("Purity and Danger" by Lee Rust Brown, October 17) of their ancestor as "the truly Abrahamic Smith, who consummated at least forty-eight marriages, some with the wives of followers, during the decade before his death." Joseph Smith had one wife, Emma, and one child, Joseph Smith III. Brown seems to have someone else in mind.

BEN RASMUSEN
Leland, Illinois

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FROM WASHINGTON

Alice in chains

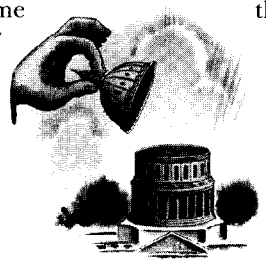
I have in my hand a startling memo in which a prominent government official proposes "dramatic changes" in Social Security. After warning about "enormous federal deficits" and "unstable" financing, the memo suggests abolishing benefits for every American under 40, while imposing a new national value-added tax (VAT) of about $200 billion per year. Naturally, these potentially unpopular steps are presented as merely "an example of one possible solution"—but the memo clearly favors this solution. No wonder that two weeks before the midterm election, the author of the memo doesn't want to talk about it, while an aide dismisses it as "ill-considered."

Indeed, it's hard not to feel a twinge of sympathy for the memo's author, House Republican Whip Newt Gingrich. At the time he issued his impolitic (and quite public) Social Security plan, the Georgia congressman seemed to have a sincere interest in transforming the "liberal welfare state"—or at least he had a sincere interest in being seen as someone sincerely interested in transforming the welfare state. But that was 1986. Now it's 1994, and Gingrich's interest is purely in acquiring more power. He has of necessity learned to compromise, to denounce the welfare state while defending its biggest program. Most recently, he has pounced on President Clinton's budget director, Alice Rivlin, for suggesting in an internal memo (leaked to *The Washington Post*) that Social Security benefits might be trimmed. What does Gingrich charge? Hypocrisy, of course.

After the mid-October leak of Rivlin's memo, the crack Clinton damage-magnification team swung into action. First, Clinton's senior adviser George Stephanopoulos distanced the president from the memo, saying it was only a "catalogue" of outside ideas. Then Clinton embraced the memo as an attempt to counter "the kinds of problems that might be created" if Gingrich-led Republicans somehow won approval of their now-famous "Contract with America."

That was ... well, a lie. It was an obvious lie, since the text of Rivlin's memo plainly suggests Social Security cuts (and tax increases) as a way to finance *Clinton's* agenda, not Gingrich's. It was also an unnecessary lie. The Rivlin memo was *nothing to be ashamed of, nor did it* move the Democrats even close to Gingrich in the hypocrisy sweepstakes.

True, the Democrats have been trying to scare voters by claiming the Republican "contract" will threaten Social Security and require "devastating cuts in Medicare." The Republicans played the Social Security card first, with ads attacking Democrats for a mild tax on benefits contained in Clinton's 1993 budget. (This provision—which simply applied the income tax to a larger portion of the checks of upper-income recipients—was ominously labeled an "elderly surtax" by Republicans.) But what justifies Democratic scare tactics isn't the playground ethic of "they started it." The justification is that Gingrich's poll-driven "contract" really is a bit scary.



In crafting the "contract," Gingrich followed the proven political strategy of promising specific benefits ($300 billion in tax cuts plus a balanced budget by 2002) while neglecting to mention that they cannot be achieved without considerable, unspecified, pain—in this case, at least $1 trillion in unspecified pain. (The cost of balancing the budget by 2002 is about $1 trillion even *without* the tax cuts.)

What are Democrats supposed to do when faced with this scam? They can give up, I suppose, bowing to Gingrich's superior ruthlessness. They can get all high-minded and charge the Republicans with fiscal irresponsibility. Or they can take the Republican proposal and spell out its possible consequences.

Specifically, they can (accurately) say something like: "If you're really going to eliminate the deficit while financing all these other promises, you're almost certainly going to have to make large cuts in the two biggest government spending programs, Social Security and Medicare." Maybe they shouldn't go as far as Majority Leader Richard Gephardt, whose television ads charge that the "contract" translates into precisely a "$158 a month cut in Social Security." But neither are Democrats obligated to point out that Gingrich is such a transparent panderer that he'd undoubtedly abandon the balanced budget goal before cutting a penny from anyone's checks. They are entitled to take the Republican proposal seriously.

And what about Rivlin's memo? It offers Clinton an "illustrative range" of six "packages," the last of which, like the Republican contract, consists of a balanced budget plus a lot of goodies—in this case "major new funding for popular causes" such as "skills/training." Rivlin points out that you can't do all this without "large ... options in tax expenditure and entitlement reform"—i.e., big tax increases and cuts in Social Security and Medicare. She suggests, as one of her tax options, a VAT less than one-eighth the size of the one Gingrich proposed in 1986. (Imagine the fuss Gingrich could have made if he'd caught her Xeroxing *his* old plan.)

In essence, what Rivlin is telling Clinton in private—that you can't pay for new initiatives and balance the budget without a lot of pain—is exactly the same thing the Democrats are telling voters in public. Where's the hypocrisy in that? Clinton isn't the one promising that he can balance the budget by 2002. Gingrich is. Nor is there any evidence that Clinton was about to sign off on Rivlin's painful sixth "package."

I admit, it's hard to read the Rivlin memo and not believe that Clinton wasn't seriously considering *some* entitlement cuts—perhaps a phasing-out of benefits for the richest 20 percent of recipients, which Rivlin says would save about $100 billion over five years. That's not as big a cut as would be required to pay for Gingrich's "contract." It would, however, fund a lot of "skills/training."

But did Clinton really promise to defend every cent of Social Security and Medicare? Alas, if he didn't before Rivlin's memo leaked, he did soon afterward. (With Nixon, it was the cover-up that killed. With Clinton, it's the spin.) "I do not support cuts in Social Security," Clinton told reporters the day of the *Post* disclosure. "There is nothing in that memo and nothing in the record which should indicate that I have changed my position." There is plenty in the record, however, to indicate he may be changing his "position" sometime soon. To that extent, the hypocrisy charge sticks.

But it could be worse. Remember Gingrich's 1986 Social Security plan? That turned out to be a fraud too. It sounded almost painless. Only when you examined it closely did you realize that it would have forced under-40 workers to pay both for their parents' retirement and for their own. In effect, their Social Security tax burden would have been almost doubled.

Next to Newt, Clinton's a piker.

MICKEY KAUS

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

NOVEMBER 14, 1994

FORGOTTEN ONES

Economic recoveries are supposed to provide boosts—to sitting presidents, to the majority party in Congress and to the people concerned not with polls but with their pocketbooks. The current economic upturn, however, has been atypically cruel, and not only to President Clinton and Democratic incumbents. Despite the rising tide, the 8 million families in America that are considered poor continue to founder.

Since President Clinton took office, business activity has increased and unemployment has fallen. That's swell. But alongside this good news comes a dismal counterpoint: on October 6 the Census Bureau reported that in 1993 there were more people with incomes below the poverty line than there were in 1992. And if you compare 1993 with 1977—years that had comparable unemployment rates, and that fell at similar points in the business cycle—you'll find the bad news confirmed. According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, which conducted such a study, the poverty rate in 1977 was less than 12 percent. In 1993 it was slightly more than 15 percent.

The new Census figures also reveal a troubling trend in who the poor are. For decades, families headed by single mothers have been more likely to be poor than two-parent families. Now we learn that poverty rates have increased for two-parent families as well. These figures suggest that it's not the easy targets of crumbling family values or a screwed-up welfare system that are to blame (that's another story), but something more basic: an erosion of wages and a growing number of people who work full time yet can't keep a family of four afloat.

Various federal policies—transfer payments and benefits such as Food Stamps and Medicaid—do help. One of the most important balms of late has been Clinton's expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit, which gives a tax break to poor, working families with children. This year the expanded program pushed 312,000 families over or within $500 of the poverty line; by 1996 the figure should approach 2 million. There's no question that the program will smooth the slope of the rising poverty trend line.

But if the government is bringing more people out of poverty, wage erosion is simultaneously pushing more people into it. It's a Sisyphean battle. Poverty is still climbing, just less rapidly. The administration predicts that by 1996 the poverty rate will actually go down (counting gains from the Earned Income Tax Credit). It adds the whopping caveat, however, that much depends on overall macroeconomic trends. And if wages fell with positive macroeconomic trends last year, one shudders to think what might happen should we be subject to an economic downturn.

What to do? Labor Secretary Robert Reich thinks the answer is training programs. He claims that those who spend a year or more in training will enjoy an average increase in income of 5 to 6 percent. But for the most poorly paid workers, that boost doesn't mean all that much. Someone working full-time at the minimum wage now earns $8,840 per year. Add 6 percent and you have an uninspiring salary of $9,370, far below the official poverty line for a family of four. Even if you factor in the Earned Income Tax Credit, you're still shy of the poverty line—itself an unreasonably low standard for a decent daily existence. To be sure, this doesn't mean job training is worthless, or even a bad idea. It has been shown to be admirably effective among experienced workers, such as loggers in the Pacific Northwest. But it sure isn't a panacea for poverty.

What's left? There's always the minimum wage. If it had kept pace with its 1970s purchasing power, it would be about $5.50 per hour, rather than the current, and anemic, $4.25. Raising it would be a healthy start. As we've noted before in these pages, the argument that a higher minimum wage will price the poor out of jobs doesn't wash; most minimum-wagers are middle-class teenagers working for pocket money, not poor men and women toiling to pay the rent (see "Go Take a Hike," The Editors, May 16, 1988, and "Take a Hike" by Stephanie Mencimer, May 23, 1994). The Clinton administration should give the proposal serious consideration, especially as it moves to reform welfare. Though we're not naive enough to think this simple act will end poverty, we are hopeful enough to believe it will shorten the long and unhappy shadow poverty still casts over our republic. •

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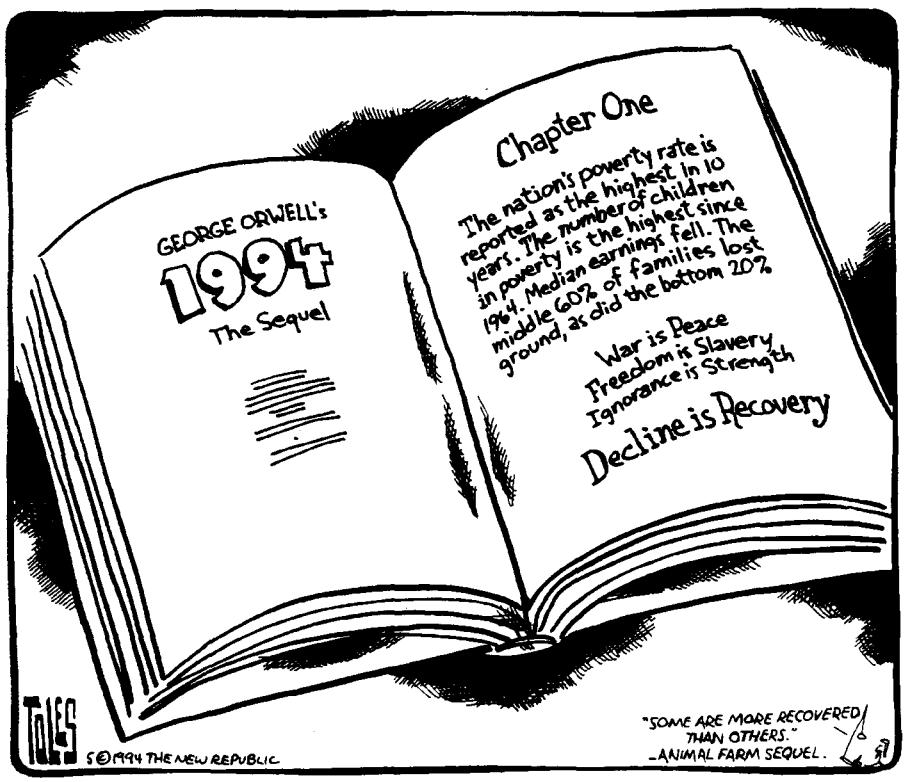
NOTEBOOK

SIC TRANSIT: Ten thousand Texans were driven out of their homes by floods. In a nationwide poll, 42 percent of Americans said they had never heard of Newt Gingrich. Gingrich described himself as "the most serious, systematic revolutionary of modern times." Senator Conrad Burns of Montana told the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* that when a rancher asked him, "Conrad, how can you live back there with all those niggers?" he replied that it was "a hell of a challenge." Madonna announced she had found her true love and looked forward to having children with him. Mario Cuomo asked Madonna to tell his wife, Matilda, that he was a sex symbol. After Bob Borndach of Wood Dale, Illinois, used a billboard reading, "TERI, PLEASE MARRY ME! LOVE, BOB," to propose marriage to Teri Unger, ten women named Teri called the billboard company. "One was in a total panic because she was dating two Bobs," said a company employee. The government of Abkhazia, Georgia, in the former Soviet Union, issued commemorative stamps of Groucho Marx and John Lennon.


GEORGE ORWELL'S
1994
The Sequel
Chapter One
The nation's poverty rate is reported as the highest in 10 years. The number of children in poverty is the highest since 1964. Median earnings fell. The middle 60% of families lost ground, as did the bottom 20%
War is Peace
Freedom is Slavery
Ignorance is Strength
Decline is Recovery
TOLES
©1994 THE NEW REPUBLIC
"SOME ARE MORE RECOVERED THAN OTHERS."
-ANIMAL FARM SEQUEL.

GOOSE STEP LIVELY: Scott Lively is back. Lively, readers may remember, is a high-ranking member of the Oregon Citizens Alliance, which is crusading for anti-gay legislation in the Beaver State and around the country. Two years ago, in its failed attempt to amend the Oregon Constitution to declare homosexuality "perverse" and "wrong," the OCA released a video characterizing typical gay male behavior as wildly promiscuous, sadomasochistic and often murderous. Lively, then the group's communications director, defended the work on the basis of his own field research in Portland-area parks. "You ought to take a walk through Laurelhurst Park about 11 p.m. and see what goes on in the bushes," he told *The Oregonian* at the time. This year, with a new anti-gay measure on the ballot and a new job title (he's now the OCA's membership director), Lively has reached even greater reportorial depths. He is putting forth, at the group's meetings and rallies, a thesis that argues Nazism was an outgrowth of the German gay rights movement. The Holocaust was orchestrated by homosexuals; the "limited persecution" of gays during the Second World War can be attributed to the Nazi leadership's sexual orientation. "The truth is homosexuals were an integral part of the Nazi Party throughout history," Lively wrote in a letter to the *Daily Astorian*. According to Lon Mabon, the OCA's executive director, his colleague's research began roughly two years ago when the group's opponents compared its political tactics to those of the National Socialists. "The homosexual community and many of those that support that position have called our proponents Nazis and ... categorized me as Hitler or any other infamous Nazi," said Mabon in a recent interview with Oregon Public Broadcasting. "And so once we started to look at that a little bit—because, actually, we got some mail from people saying, 'You need to look into it'—[we discovered] many of the leading Nazis actually were homosexuals." Students of history will be pleased to note that Lively's hard work will not be wasted. He plans to turn his research into a book.

IT'S ACADEMIC: In his article on affirmative action ("Is Affirmative Action Doomed?" TNR, October 17), Jeffrey Rosen noted that during the 1980s the University of Texas, Stanford and other top law schools reviewed applications from minority and non-minority applicants separately. Officials at Stanford Law School, however, point to a procedural distinction: at Texas, minority applications were reviewed by a minority admissions subcommittee; at Stanford, one faculty member reviewed all the minority files and then passed his recommendations on to the admissions committee chair. •

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Unloading Vatican paraphernalia.

PAPAL DISPENSATION

By Robert Sullivan

When the Archdiocese of Newark chose Robbi Promotional, a Newark, New Jersey-based souvenir firm, to be the official producer of souvenirs for the rally that Pope John Paul II had planned for Giants Stadium last month, it was a souvenir merchandiser's dream come true. "It's like this," said Robbi Villani, president of Robbi Promotional, recalling his euphoria. "We did some hats for the Rolling Stones, but we found out that the pope crowd outsells the Stones crowd. We called the people in Denver who dealt with the pope when he went there, and they said that seven out of ten people who went to see him bought an item. They said to me in essence, 'Robbi, the pope makes a *lot*. He's a safe sell.' "

That was all Villani needed to hear. In a record six weeks—and with no word from the Church that the pope might cancel—Villani assembled 45,000 commemorative T-shirts, 20,000 embroidered hats, a few thousand coffee mugs (each graced with a picture of the Holy Father), a few thousand sets of special Meadowlands rosary beads, 90,000 papal flags, 90,000 candles and 90,000 papal snack packs (each containing a bag of officially sanctioned Reese's Pieces). Villani even began to make concessionary inroads into other papal tour sites in the Northeast, including an event planned for Yonkers Raceway. "We had Yonkers hook, line and sinker," he said.

The imminent papal boom also led Villani to turn down other lucrative manufacturing offers. He passed on handling the T-shirts for the New York City Marathon, for instance, an event his company had merchandised in the past. For, as Villani saw it then, the papal tour would be a defining moment for Robbi Productions; it would lead to national prominence at License Expo, the national licensing show, to be held in Las Vegas this winter. "There is no higher standard to be set," Villani stated flatly. "This was the pope. This was going to be our marquis event, and it was going to take us national. When you do the pope, you go out there and they say, 'Hey, they're the guys who did the pope. What *can't* they do?' "

But Villani also considered the pope job a kind of spiritual payoff for sixteen years of entrepreneurial endurance. The company started in 1978, when Villani, while trying to earn a law degree, began selling T-shirts out of the trunk of a car owned by Ernest Ricci, a former high-school basketball teammate and soon-to-be vice president of Robbi Promotions. Over the years, Robbi Promotions grew to fill thousands of orders for T-shirts, baseball caps, sweatshirts and bandannas for clients such as Pink Floyd, Trump Tower, *T.V. Guide*, liquor companies and Atlantic City casinos. The company even managed to weather a fierce recession that hit the souvenir and specialty item industry in 1990.

Lately, business had begun to pick up, but when he landed the papal job on the strength of his previous work, Villani considered it the big, infallible order Robbi Promotions had long been waiting for. "We'd been through the worst and we felt, honestly, that God was watching," he said. "I mean, I honestly felt that, with all seriousness, with this contract, somebody was thanking us for working day and night and always trying to do the right thing. And this is not a ridiculous fairy-tale story. That's how I really felt."

Then, a few days after the papal souvenirs were finally assembled, without any warning, the pope canceled his trip for health reasons. Morale at Robbi Productions hit bottom; for Villani, it was like something out of the Book of Job. "Let me tell you something," Villani said. "Right now, it's so disheartening. We're just trying to get to the next step."

The next step is the canceled papal tour commemorative pack, which would include a canceled papal tour commemorative medal, flag and T-shirt, all printed with the canceled tour's logo, pictures of the pope and the dates of the canceled tour. It is being sold through a newly organized subsidiary of Robbi Promotions called The Papal Merchandise Fulfillment Center. "We have the shirts which refer to the Year of the Family and have a picture of the Holy Father on the front with the official logo," Villani said. "But they have no backs, so we're hoping to market to the Catholic schools in Jersey, possibly with the school name and/or a 'Get Well Pope' message on the back. But the bottom line is there is still interest in the merchandise."

For its part, the Archdiocese sounds as if it might feel a little guilty about the extent of Robbi Promotion's losses—the contract the Archdiocese negotiated set Robbi up with all the risk—so it is doing a little marketing penance by pushing the commemorative packs with Crusaderesque zeal in New Jersey's churches every Sunday. "We're calling it 'The Greatest Show That Never Was,' " said Steve Michalek, who is in charge of purchasing for the Archdiocese. "It's first-come, first-served. There are no gimmicks. We've slashed prices. We're really trying to move everything. For $10 you get the pack and the T-shirt. What the hell. It's a nice T-shirt. All cotton."

Apparently, papal souvenirs can be a litigious business, even when the pope shows—the papal souvenir merchandiser in Denver, initially sued by the Archdiocese for unpaid royalties, countersued the Church for attempted extortion. But Villani has so far maintained good relations with the Archdiocese of Newark. "We still trust the Church," he said. "There is no animosity. We're still on the same page. But it gets to a point in time where you say, 'Where does your faith lead you?' "

ROBERT SULLIVAN is a free-lance writer based in Portland, Oregon.

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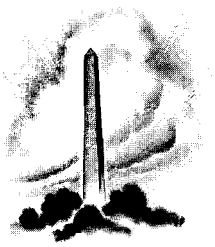
SCHWARTZ CUTS

By Weston Kosova

Carol Schwartz has got the place surrounded. The Republican candidate for D.C. mayor is staked out in front of the Giant supermarket on the corner of 7th and O Streets in Northwest Washington, where she's ambushing the mostly elderly, mostly black shoppers as they make their way to the automatic door. At the moment, she's engaging a husband and wife ambling hand-in-hand behind a shopping cart. "Are you a D.C. voter?" Schwartz asks the codger in a three-piece suit. He nods weakly. "And how about you?" she croons, taking the man's whisper-thin wife by the arm and pressing a pamphlet into her hand. "Will you think about me November 8th?"



Behind her, a young man in coveralls attempts to slip by unaccosted. A brave effort, but no one is escaping Carol Schwartz today. If you want food on this chilly October morning, you're going to talk to Schwartz first. Unhanding the matron, the candidate whirls around and locks on target. He picks up the pace; but it's no use. "Sir? Sir?" she shouts after him. "Are you a D.C. voter?" Her cigarette-scuffed voice finally stops him in his tracks. "I'm only asking you to give me a chance," she pleads. "He's already had his turn to be mayor. Twelve years is a long time. No one has a God-given right to this office. Not even people who act like they do."

Schwartz rarely speaks the name Marion Barry, preferring to allude to him instead. More often than not, she has discovered, the mention of his name undermines her cause. The Giant and the neighborhood that surrounds it is Barry country, and she's an intruder. Though the people she encounters here are generally polite, most seem more bemused by the presence of the fiftyish white Republican than actually interested in what she has to say. "I don't know anything about that Carol Schwartz," a husky, middle-aged man announces to one of the four television crews crowding around her. "I'm a Democrat. I don't want to have anything to do with the Republicans."

It's a sentiment she's heard a thousand times. Schwartz is painfully aware of the obstacles facing a Republican running in an overwhelmingly Democratic city. She's been doing it for twenty years. She sat on the School Board for eight years in the '70s and early '80s (six as vice president). As a member of the City Council, she was Barry's brashest critic. And this isn't the first time she's gone up against him directly. Schwartz was the Republicans' sacrificial candidate in 1986, at the height of Barry's decade of invincibility. "Back then, I'd be the first one to tell you I didn't have a prayer," she says.

This time around, she's playing it smarter. Schwartz's campaign has been carefully designed to spackle over all traces of her party affiliation. Just try to find the word "Republican" on any of her campaign posters or pamphlets (all the blurbs are from Democrats). She has turned down all endorsement offers from GOP well-wishers in Congress. And she is adamant about her refusal to take campaign contributions from the party itself. "How can I go to Capitol Hill as mayor and demand that they stay out of our way," she asks, "when with the other hand I'm taking their money?"

Politically, there's not much that distinguishes Schwartz from the average Democrat. She's pro-choice, against prayer in school (though she's for a "moment of silence"), an ardent gay-rights supporter and a gun control advocate. But that hasn't stopped Barry from branding her as a right-wing stooge. If Schwartz's campaign depends on her ability to divorce herself from her Republican lineage, Barry's depends on constantly bringing it up. At a recent debate in a synagogue in wealthy, white Ward 3—home to Schwartz and the lion's share of her supporters—Barry addressed her as "my Republican opponent." When Schwartz delivered a stinging invective against Barry's tenure in office, the former mayor shot back with a sermon about the "party of Newt Gingrich, Jesse Helms and Oliver North." When Schwartz detailed her twelve-point plan to revitalize the city's economy, Barry responded with a lecture about "Carol's friend, Ronald Reagan."

Clearly, Barry harbors no fears of losing to Schwartz on substance. Or, for that matter, of losing to her at all. Since winning the primary, his pace has slackened. He tours the city at his leisure, dipping into neighborhoods here and there to chat with the people. Barry's biggest political concern seems to be reminding his supporters that he isn't mayor yet. At a recent rally, he led the crowd in a mnemonic chant of "November 8! November 8!"

Barry's confidence shows in other ways. Throughout the Ward 3 debate, he teased Schwartz with condescending displays of support. At one point in Schwartz's harangue against the Barry bureaucracy, he leaned into the microphone and whispered, "Go Carol, go!" Schwartz wrapped up her closing remarks with a new slogan: "If you have a problem with me being a Republican, get over it!" The line, a play on Barry's warning to the city's white voters, drew wild applause. Barry laughed harder than anyone. He reached over and gave Schwartz a high-five.

Schwartz can handle the teasing. What drives her crazy is what she calls the "selfishness" of Barry's campaign. "It's all this talk about the redemption of Marion Barry," she says contemptuously. "If he's been redeemed, then good for him. I wish him well. But this election isn't about one man's personal redemption." Worse still is Barry's age-old habit of making outlandish campaign

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pledges. "Do you know, he's still promising a job to every kid he sees on the street?" she says, exasperated. "And a college education for every kid in this bankrupt city. Then those kids come up to me and say, 'Marion Barry said he'll give me a job, will you do the same thing?' What can I say? I have to stand there and explain to them that I'm going to bring about economic incentives for businesses to come to the city, and hopefully that will result in their getting a job."

Despite the odds, a Schwartz victory is not inconceivable. Campaign contributions are on the rise, thanks in part to a lavish endorsement by *The Washington Post.* And her army of volunteers (she has no paid staff) now numbers more than 1,000. If overconfident Barry supporters don't show up at the polls and Ward 3 voters, Barry-haters and independents turn out in force ... anyway, stranger things have happened.

Just ask Carol Schwartz. As the flow of Giant shoppers thins, she decides it's time to head back to H.Q. for lunch. As she gets ready to leave, a wizened hand taps her on the shoulder. "I want you to know," the old man says, grinning, "I've been a Republican all my life. And I always will be. And I will vote for you." He turns and walks off. Schwartz takes a silent second, then looks around, mouth open. "Did you hear *that*?" she says. •

The AMA's latest bad idea.

WILLING AND ABLE

By Paul Offner

The great health care battle of 1994 is now a memory, and once again the American Medical Association and its allies have stopped comprehensive reform. The only problem for the doctors is that they also don't like the status quo; the current system of competition among health plans is as unpalatable to them as government regulation. So while everyone else has been focusing on premium caps and employer mandates, the doctors have launched an all-out attack on market competition. They may win that fight, too.

It is not a new cause. Twenty-five years ago health maintenance organizations (HMOs) were *the* enemy as far as the medical establishment was concerned. But then Richard Nixon proclaimed that HMOs were vital to cost containment, and Governors Ronald Reagan and Nelson Rockefeller started pushing them in California and New York. Suddenly, as Paul Starr wrote, "the socialized medicine of one era had become the corporate reform of the next." By 1992 the AMA decided that managed care wasn't so bad. In a speech to the HMO trade group, AMA head Jim Todd acknowledged that HMOs promote prevention and contain costs.

The organization's members, however, never bought the new line. They maintained that costs should have no bearing on medical decisions. "Many physicians," the association complained recently, "are excluded from [health] networks because their practice style puts patient health ahead of the plan's financial bottom line." Not quite. If a physician routinely orders expensive tests and pursues aggressive treatments for every malady, then managed care plans won't contract with him. Such physicians must either alter their practice styles or risk losing business. If these financial pressures become excessive, government should step in, but that's no reason to exempt physicians altogether.

By 1994, with HMO membership reaching 50 million, many physicians have already faced such pressures. They don't like it. So they're pushing for laws to force health plans to accept *any* health provider who agrees to abide by the plans' rules and payment schedules. The logic has turned around completely: after almost fifty years of fighting HMOs, the doctors now want to require HMOs to let them in. The same is true of optometrists, pharmacists and chiropractors. The urgency of the situation is even toppling historic barriers, like that between chiropractors and physicians; recently, representatives of the two groups met across a conference table in Washington to plot their campaign against managed care. So far, fifteen states have passed these "any willing provider" laws, and last June, in reporting out its version of the Clinton health plan, the House Ways and Means Committee adopted an amendment from Democratic Representative William Jefferson of Louisiana that does the same nationally. It could end up in any reform package Congress passes in the next few years.

But HMOs cannot operate effectively if they are forced to enroll any willing providers. Here's why. A health plan purchases care on behalf of its members. A plan approaches a group of physicians and tries to get discounts (or other favorable terms) by agreeing to send the physician group a given number of patients. But if outside doctors can join the group simply by agreeing to the contract, there's no guarantee that the group's original members will benefit; they'll have to share their new patients with the Johnny-come-lately physicians. The law will simply encourage doctors to sit back and see who else contracts with a given plan—and then hook up with one of those groups. Imagine applying this rule to the construction industry. After a contract has been awarded, the losing bidders could still share in the work simply by agreeing to the terms of the winning bidder's contract. Why bother to submit a bid?

While AMA members are working to enact any willing provider laws, the group's national leaders say they can't support such efforts. Irrevocably opposed to price controls, they hesitate to take on market competition as well. But a growing number of the rank-and-file members feel that in a choice between price controls and managed care, they'll take the former. For example, in 1992, the 70,000-member College of Physicians and the 75,000-member Academy of Family Physicians endorsed

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government spending caps. Last February the College of Surgeons told a House committee that it was endorsing a single-payer plan "out of frustration with insurer-run managed care plans."

Such divisions, and the attendant infighting, have long characterized the AMA. House Republican Whip Newt Gingrich claims the national leaders are "out of touch with rank-and-file physicians." The leadership wants reform, says Robert Graham, head of the Academy of Family Physicians, but "the rank and file would kill it without a qualm." At bottom, the AMA has no policy on either containing costs or broadening coverage.

This record notwithstanding, it would be a mistake to dismiss the physicians as insignificant players in the health care debate. Though divided, they are still effective. And local physicians today are on a crusade to destroy managed care. That's significant because, for the moment, managed care is the only health reform strategy we've got. Market forces, which are widely credited with reducing health inflation over the past eighteen months, would be seriously weakened if Congress enacts an any willing provider law. And it could do so. The health and insurance industries have poured more than $26 million into congressional coffers over the past eighteen months, says Citizen Action, a consumer advocacy group, with the goal of weakening cost containment.

Still, there is hope. While the House has tended to support any willing provider laws in the past, the Senate has not. The Clinton administration is opposed, as is the National Governors Association. Indeed, any willing provider laws were recently vetoed by the governors of Florida, Maine and Massachusetts. We can only hope that the members of Congress heed the Hippocratic oath. Having so far failed to do much good in their health reform efforts, they should at least do no harm.

PAUL OFFNER is a legislative aide to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York. The views expressed here are his own.

CAMPAIGN '94

DONKEY KONG

By Fred Barnes

In one of his T.V. ads, Senate candidate Jim Cooper—Harvard grad, Rhodes Scholar, U.S. representative, Democrat—walks down the steps of a country church in Tennessee, holding a child. It was his great-grandparents' church, Cooper says. "It's where I was baptized and where our children were baptized," he continues, now standing alone in front of the building. "The values I learned here are as important today as when this church was built—respect for each other, respect for the law, discipline in the classrooms and prayer in our schools, and swift, certain justice in our courts. We're not going to agree on every issue, but I want you to know what I believe."

This Cooper spot is remarkable for two reasons. First, it's *so* Republican. Normally, GOP candidates are the ones who ostentatiously embrace conservative values, while Democrats hammer them for insensitivity and narrow-mindedness. Second, it's an ad that, if run by a Republican, might get the candidate in hot water. Imagine a Republican appearing in a similar spot in 1992, especially after Patrick Buchanan's GOP convention speech announcing a "religious war." The roof would have fallen in. The Republican would have been accused of flaunting his religion, promoting intolerance and so on. In fact, those same accusations might be made against a Republican who ran such an ad *this* year. But in Cooper's case, there hasn't been a peep of protest.

Cooper is not alone: Democratic candidates almost everywhere sound like Republicans. They've become me-too Democrats. They're tough on crime, ruthless on spending, leery of government, fond of family values. Mimicking Republicans is but one tack Democrats have taken as their fears of a GOP landslide on November 8 have grown. They've also gone negative like never before, attacking Republicans at least as vigorously as Republicans attack them. For the first time in thirty years, House Speaker Tom Foley is airing a negative ad. And in some campaigns, Democrats have adopted exactly the tactics they've zinged Republicans for using in the past. These, I'd say, are signs of desperation.

At least one Democratic candidate seems to have forgotten his party's charges of Republican racism, as in the Willie Horton ad in 1988. David Perryman, the Democratic candidate for an open House seat in Oklahoma, put a twenty-year-old picture of his Republican opponent, J. C. Watts, in a T.V. commercial. Watts, a former University of Oklahoma football star and now a state corporation commissioner, is black. The picture is from Watts's Eufala High School yearbook, and he sports a giant Afro. Perryman insisted it was merely to show that Watts played football in high school, while Perryman worked on a farm. Sure. Black leaders condemned the ad as a racist attempt to link Watts, a conservative Christian, to black militancy. Watts responded with good humor. "I was a little offended he thought that might hurt me because after all I was kind of proud of my Afro," he said. "I worked hard on it."

While Democrats like Cooper have stressed their religion, others have criticized the beliefs of their opponents. Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, in his race against Mitt Romney, attacked his challenger's Mormonism. In California, Bill Press, the California Democratic chairman, repeatedly trashed the religious views of Arianna Huffington, wife of Republican Senate candidate Michael Huffington. The campaign of Huffington's opponent, Democratic Senator Dianne Fein-

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stein, suggested callers raise the question of Arianna's religion in a Huffington-Feinstein debate.

Another Democrat who's gone ballistic is Governor Lawton Chiles of Florida. In thirty years of successful campaigns for the state legislature, U.S. Senate and governor's office, Chiles has been gentlemanly, substantive and positive. Not anymore. Against Republican Jeb Bush, the former president's son, he's been nitpicking and negative. He accused Bush of not voting for his father in 1992. Wrong. Jeb Bush voted absentee. In a debate at Disney World, Chiles became flustered and started shouting after Bush accused him of dealing in dirt. "Why? Why, sir, after thirty-plus years of public service do you now feel compelled to throw mud?" Bush asked. Chiles said his record had been distorted, his integrity challenged. He also chided Bush's parents. "I just have found no reason from their past service to see where it gives them the opportunity to give one of their sons Texas and the other Florida." Going negative has backfired on Chiles. Bush is now favored.

Democrats may be flailing, but many of them have agreed there's one safe position in the campaign: identifying with traditional values. The campaign of Lloyd Doggett, one of Texas's foremost liberals, distributed a flyer that asked, "WHY WOULD CONSERVATIVES LIKE US WANT LLOYD DOGGETT AS OUR U.S. CONGRESSMAN?" The answers included Doggett's support for "strong family values" and the fact that "he is very conservative in his own financial dealings." The flyer invited folks to attend a fund-raiser whose host, Roya Johnson, lauded the "conservative philosophy" of Doggett. Doggett, running for the House seat in Austin, is opposed by an aggressive Republican, Jo Baylor, a black conservative.

In Tennessee, Democratic Senator Jim Sasser has run a series of ads emphasizing social conservatism. In one spot, Sasser, sitting on a picnic table, laments "the decline of moral values—families falling apart, children growing up with no role models. But I think there are things we can do to help—getting pornography off television, reforming the welfare system, funds for the police and, yes, restoring prayer to schools." Senate candidate Bob Carr in Michigan uses a television ad to note: "Sometimes it seems the moral fabric of our society is coming apart.... We've got to get back to some basics and that means individual responsibility."

In Nebraska, Senator Bob Kerrey echoes the anti-government theme associated with countless Republicans. Bureaucrats, he says in one T.V. commercial, "don't understand that the money for their salary and the money for their administrative costs comes from the people themselves. The government is the most formidable enemy of all sometimes. They can put a family out of business. They can ruin your life." Though North Dakota Senator Kent Conrad is not threatened with defeat, he has gone on T.V. with an ad quibbling with the charge that he votes with President Clinton most of the time. "That's a meaningless statistic," he says. Most votes are non-partisan, Conrad says, and he goes on to mention that "a majority of the time I vote with Republican Leader Bob Dole." •

CAMPAIGN '94

THE JERSEY BOOR

By Francis Wilkinson

At a time when Congress is in nationwide disrepute and the institution's own fraternal bonds, once preserved in the honeyed amber of mutual esteem, are frayed to the breaking point, you have to wonder what drives a guy like Frank Lautenberg.

Like many Democratic incumbents, Lautenberg is facing a stiff re-election challenge this fall. His opponent, New Jersey assembly speaker Chuck Haytaian, is a grim alternative whose rusty Republican boilerplate has failed to inspire voters. By his aggressive shakedowns of contributors Haytaian has even managed to offend some staunch Republicans, but no matter. New Jersey voters, having dispatched Governor Jim Florio to private law practice last year, are still a restless bunch. Lautenberg, who has never had an easy race, is widely regarded as vulnerable. A poll taken in late October showed Lautenberg leading Haytaian 50 percent to 36 percent, but it also revealed that three weeks before the election, 60 percent of the senator's support was weak.

As Lautenberg pursues a third Senate term, however, it seems fitting to ask why. After all, he has worked hard in the Senate for a dozen years. But what has the Senate ever done for him? He hardly ever gets a shot at "Meet the Press" or "Nightline." The White House, known for gently caressing wayward Democrats who cross the president, gave Lautenberg an icy shoulder after the normally supportive senator—fearful of backing a tax hike—voted against budget reconciliation last year. And Lautenberg is among the Senate's least popular members. This year, for example, he was booed by his colleagues on the Senate floor during a gift-ban debate.

Lautenberg, 70, seems to keep coming back for more not because he enjoys the diminishing returns of Washington, but because he simply can't believe there isn't more to it. Former aides describe a man who has looked for love in—of all the wrong places—the Senate and has ended up feeling slighted by colleagues and constituents. "He wanted to achieve a certain satisfaction that he didn't get in business," says a former staffer. "He wants to be liked."

The son of a Polish father and a Russian mother, Lautenberg grew up in hardscrabble Paterson, New Jersey, where his father worked in the silk mills and behind luncheonette counters. "I came from the bottom of the ladder no matter how you define the ladder," he says. In Paterson, the Lautenbergs alternated between spare,

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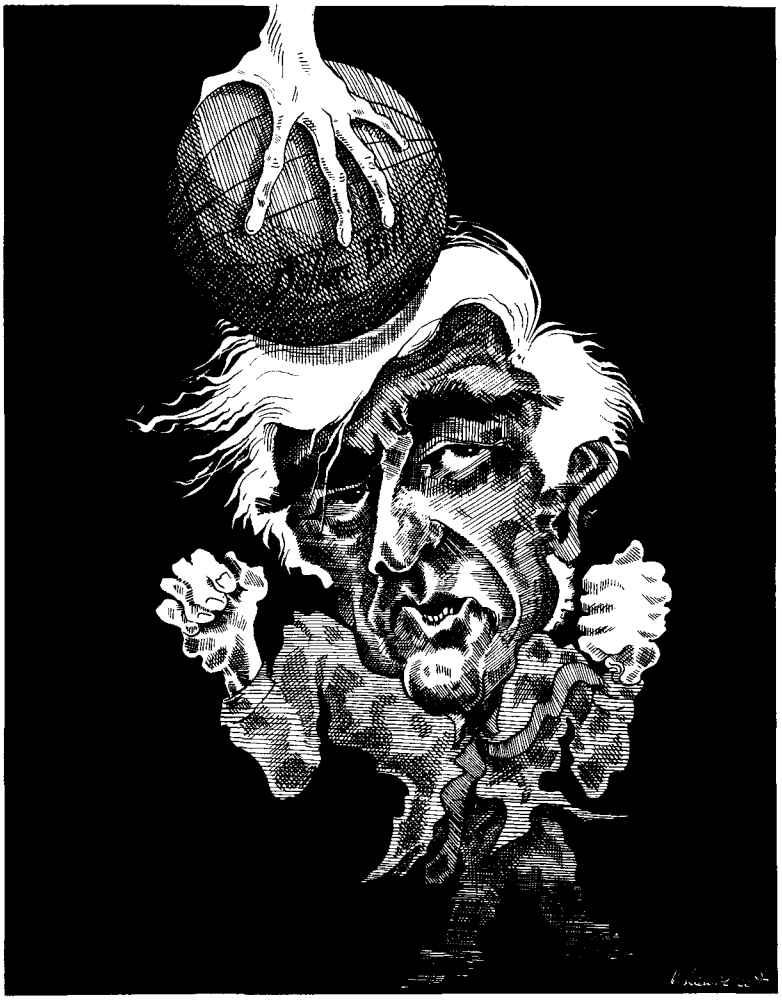
rented houses and the home of his maternal grandmother, where the family retreated after each burst of the financial bubble. "Every time my father would venture out to try to do something in business," Lautenberg recalls, "either through exhaustion or failure, at some point we'd be forced to turn back to my grandmother's house."

Lautenberg succeeded in business as spectacularly as his father had failed. After graduating from Columbia University on the G.I. Bill, he and two partners launched Automatic Data Processing, a payroll processing firm. "I married in 1956," he recalls, "until 1963 I didn't take a vacation, not even a two-day weekend." He made millions. Using his wealth to become a prominent Democratic fundraiser, Lautenberg earned a line on Richard Nixon's enemies list. He considered running for governor of New Jersey in 1981, by which time, he says, "there was enough money for me, my wife, my kids, even my grandchildren." There also was enough to bankroll a formidable campaign. Lautenberg passed up a gubernatorial run, but the next year he spent $5 million of his own money to win a seat in the Senate.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

He has never seemed at home there. Clumsy and gruff, Lautenberg lacks the rudimentary phoniness so instrumental to success in Washington. He wears his insecurities like a loud tie at a Union League dinner. "If they made a movie about his life they would call it *Willy Loman Goes to Washington*," says another former aide. "He lugs his baggage from place to place looking for respect, but he never seems to get it."

Lautenberg can be awkward and bombastic even among his most familiar supporters. He recently left a gathering of key financial backers eyeing their watches as he told them (again, at length and with occasional stumbles over some of their names) of his self-made grit. Sitting for an interview in his Senate office, he speaks of values, noting the emphasis his parents placed on "income"—er, make that "education." The gaffe is characteristic. The politician in Lautenberg recognizes that his childhood poverty should be served up as a winning cliché, the kind most two-term senators deliver by rote. But after years of practice he still trips over the bitter authenticity of his past. Some guys never learn.

One prominent Washington Democrat describes Lautenberg simply as "nasty, brutish." Add New Jersey's senior senator—the six-foot, five-inch Bill Bradley—to the mix, and Lautenberg suddenly seems short, as well. For Bradley is all Lautenberg is not. A golden boy to whom everything seemed to come easily, Bradley is the banker's son and star athlete who went on to fame at Princeton University, becoming an All-American, Rhodes Scholar and, later, world champion with the New York Knicks. Bradley, who has an interest in complex national and world affairs that Lautenberg lacks, towers over his older colleague, garnering the national press's attention, Hollywood fundraising parties and admiring autograph-seekers that Lautenberg covets. "You live in the shadow of others," Lautenberg says wistfully.

Former Lautenberg aides describe a state of high anxiety in his Senate office, where Bradley's floor statements and quotes to the press are often scrutinized for sly jabs purportedly aimed at the junior senator. When Lautenberg and Bradley appeared at a New Jersey labor meeting last summer to discuss health care legislation, Lautenberg took pains to note—in Bradley's presence—that he was as vital a player on health care as Dollar Bill, whose seat and sway on the Senate Finance Committee were considered far more critical to the legislation's fate. "He wanted people to know he was as important as Bradley because of his seat on the Budget Committee," says Bob Yackel, chairman of the state AFL-CIO's public employee committee, who attended the meeting. "It was kind of a one-upmanship thing."

Lautenberg's frustration is heightened by the fact that he is arguably a more effective, meat-and-potatoes representative of his state. Though he is perhaps best-known for his legislation banning smoking on airplanes, as chairman of the Appropriations Subcommit-

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tee on Transportation he has funneled sorely needed mass transit aid to New Jersey. "He doesn't have the reputation as the nicest guy on the Hill, but he really does deliver a lot for the state, regardless of what people say about him," says a former Washington aide to Florio. (Compliments volleyed Lautenberg's way inevitably tend to arrive by backhand. "He's a pretty interesting person other than his personality," is the way Yackel, a *supporter*, describes him.)

Despite evincing considerable political skill in compiling a liberal, pro-labor voting record without alienating New Jersey business, Lautenberg is cast as his state's pothole senator while Bradley is off entertaining big thoughts. "He's New Jersey's answer to Al D'Amato," says Rutgers University political science professor Stephen Salmore. A dozen years grappling with Superfund sites and mass transit funds for Camden and the Norman Ornstein of New Brunswick decides you're a worthy peer of D'Amato. Salmore, by the way, is married to the sister of Lautenberg's chief of staff. Is it any wonder Lautenberg has a chip on his shoulder?

Lautenberg's predicament is exacerbated by the media segmentation of New Jersey, where the south is subsumed by the Philadelphia market and the north by New York City's. Thus, Lautenberg suffers the indignity of being less well-known among some of his constituents than Arlen Specter in the south or D'Amato and Daniel Patrick Moynihan in the north. As for the New Jersey print press, it tends to focus on the powerful governor's office, currently home to rising star Christine Todd Whitman, leaving Lautenberg struggling for attention.

Lautenberg has few friends to turn to in Congress. He acknowledges that his sponsorship of a lobbying reform measure, privately deemed hypocritical by some of his colleagues, hasn't helped. "It got people angry here," he says. "I have to work harder to get things done." The New Jersey congressional delegation being more or less a vipers' den, he has no close allies there. (His relations with New Jersey Representative Robert Torricelli have been particularly bitter over the years.) Lautenberg cannot turn for succor to the state's cantankerous Democratic Party, either. DNC Political Director Donald Sweitzer had to be called in to broker a deal between the Lautenberg campaign and the state party on the use of this fall's coordinated campaign funds.

Thus, Lautenberg is left to pass his golden years hunkering down in his Senate office, fending off the slights of rivals, real and perceived, with a graceless perseverance. ("I'm the Rodney Dangerfield of American politics—is that what you're asking?" he responds when questioned whether he gets the credit he deserves.) In a funny way, though, Lautenberg's knack for getting dissed may be the key to his electoral survival in November, an unspoken bond he shares with the voters. So what if he gets no respect? "In that," says a Democratic consultant, "he really is New Jersey, isn't he?"

FRANCIS WILKINSON covers national affairs for *Rolling Stone* magazine.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY POSTCARD

RAISIN HELL

By Hanna Rosin

It's rare when the forces of nature expose political folly. But that's just what happened at 6 a.m. on September 28 in the San Joaquin Valley, California's agricultural heartland, when the weather did something unexpected: it rained. Months before anyone predicted even a drizzle, the dawn sky darkened, clouds rushed in and the parched valley was drenched. Cotton growers woke to find their crops hanging limp and mottled. Grape farmers discovered rows and rows of crimson seedless and ribiers with their stems cracked, leaving the fruit susceptible to disease. Alfalfa farmers clutched at soggy bales of green mush. And raisin growers were haunted by nightmares of mildewed raisins, an especially frightening thought given that those winning commercials of dancing Sunmaids had rocketed demand to record levels. Growers scrambled to find workers to pick the crops before they rotted. But they were out of luck, for most of the migrant work force had already moved north to Washington state, where unusually mild weather had produced an early apple harvest.

The growers' predicament was rich. Before the rain, they had donated almost $1 million to the re-election campaign of Republican Governor Pete Wilson, who, with his support for Proposition 187—a measure that would deny social services to illegal aliens—has made immigration restriction the centerpiece of his political efforts. Panic over lost profits, however, turned the conspicuously silent growers into passionate defenders of the great unwashed. The next morning, growers from across the cornucopia were moaning in unison to *The Los Angeles Times*. "Let's face it," Harry Kubo, a self-described staunch Republican and head of the Nisei Farmers League, which represents 1,200 growers in the valley, told the paper. "Fifty percent of the agricultural work force in this valley is illegal. We'd sink economically without them." Casey Jones, who farms a 160-acre vineyard, was frantically calling a labor contractor, a middleman who rents out work crews. "He said a crew will be here at 6:00, but they never showed. It's all because of this political rhetoric." Ray Lopez of Fowler Packing was also fretting. "It plays well as a political issue, but if the politicians get their way, we'll be in trouble. If you removed every illegal from this state tomorrow, you'll see the whole agricultural business start to crumble."

The growers' flip-flop underscores the hypocrisy of

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the thorny immigration politics that have dominated this California campaign season: many of the illegal immigrants depicted by Republicans as welfare sponges today were actively encouraged to come to the state to work. And their invitation was extended by none other than Pete Wilson himself, who authored policies that were tantamount to a welcome mat. In 1986 then-Senator Wilson held up passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act at the behest of growers until a guest worker provision was added. This provision eventually turned into the Special Agricultural Worker program, which offered legal residency to immigrants who could prove they had been agricultural workers.

Wilson now claims that his original bill was "hijacked" by Democrats, and he wanted workers to be allowed in only temporarily. But Wilson voted for the bill, and encouraged abuses of it. In 1988, for example, he wrote to President Reagan complaining that crops were rotting and demanding that immigrants be allowed in the country on their word alone. The Immigration and Naturalization Service "is too quick to deport," he insisted. In the end, the farmworker program became a vehicle for fraud; anyone could enter the United States by presenting a letter saying he had been an agricultural worker.

That was then. This year Wilson has jumped nine points ahead of his Democratic opponent, Kathleen Brown, largely because of his support for 187. The initiative, known by supporters as "Save Our State," is backed by two out of three Californians, including almost one-quarter of all Latinos. Written by two former INS agents, the initiative taps into Californians' suspicions that illegals suck up scarce government resources. "Welfare, medical and educational benefits are the magnets that draw ILLEGAL ALIENS," the voters' manual reads. "WE CAN STOP THE ILLEGAL ALIEN INVASION NOW." Started as a grass-roots movement in suburban Orange County, the initiative was picked up by Wilson, who has turned it into his central campaign theme. He has spent millions on thirty-second commercials showing black-and-white images of pandemonium at the border. On one of them, a narrator intones: "300,000 illegal immigrant children in public schools ... and they keep coming. It's unfair when people like you are working hard."

Wilson's spiteful rhetoric has achieved one good result: it has revived the United Farm Workers, a once-powerful union in retreat for more than a decade. The union, which many predicted would disappear after the 1993 death of its founder, Cesar Chavez, has sprung to life in response to the measure. While the great majority of farmworkers are here legally, many of them feel threatened by the proposition's xenophobic overtones. And with good reason. The initiative requires public school teachers and medical providers to verify the legal status of anyone they *suspect* is illegal. "Every time they see a Mexican face they'll question it," says Arturo Rodriguez, president of the union. "How would you like it if every time you went to the doctor he asked you for your I.D. card?" But even the farmworkers here illegally are the best ones to make the case against stereotypes promoted by 187: they are here to work and, with ten-hour days that begin at 5 a.m., they do the hard work most Americans won't touch.

After eschewing organized politics for more than a decade, the union endorsed Kathleen Brown and mobilized its army of volunteers to canvass Latino neighborhoods around the state. (The union signed up 11,500 voters in one month in the San Joaquin Valley alone.) The first sign of the union's resurgence came in April when an unexpected 50,000 farmworkers showed up along the route of the *peregrinacion*, or twenty-four-day pilgrimage from Delano to Sacramento, held to memorialize the death of Chavez. "Things began to spark and then suddenly there was a great gust of wind," says Rodriguez. After the march, the union leadership decided to shift its resources from a slick media campaign promoting a grape boycott to the hard work of organizing workers in the fields. This meant reverting to the tactics of the late 1960s and 1970s—confronting growers on their abusive labor practices, holding elections for union representation and demanding fair labor contracts. Since May, the union has doubled its field offices from twelve to twenty-four. It has won seven elections, six by more than 80 percent—more activity than the union has seen in a decade. It has also increased membership from 2,000 to 10,000 in its associate membership program, which covers workers who support the union but do not work under union-negotiated contracts. "Now you see the black eagle flying over the valley," says Marc Grossman, a union spokesman, referring to the UFW flag. "We haven't seen that in a long, long time."

The union has adapted its field organizing tactics to fighting the proposition. Union leaders announce meetings on Radio Campesina, UFW's station in the valley, to gather workers and train them to register voters. At one meeting, a group of about thirty weathered looking men, still in dirty jeans and T-shirts from a day in the field, gathered on the front porch of a house that belonged to a man called El Primo. Though they spoke little English, all of them carefully followed directions on how to fill out ballots. A man in a white cowboy hat handed out copies of a union poster: "*Ningun Ser Humano Es Ilegal*" (No Human Being is Illegal).

There were other immigration-related campaigns going on that night, too. About 200 miles south, along the U.S. border near San Diego, Operation Gatekeeper, the latest government offensive to nab illegals, sprang to life. Two hundred border cops, deployed in shiny new Jeep Cherokees, Ford Broncos and small high-speed boats, and armed with field lights, laser fingerprinting equipment and night scopes, trained their eyes on the steel border fence. The offensive was a success. "We caught 825 tonight, almost four times the same night last year," bragged Gústavo De La Vina, an INS Commissioner, at the post-operation press conference. "Operation Gatekeeper," he concluded, in a phrase that could apply to just about any one of California's immigration conflagrations, "goes full blast." •

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The competing claims, as seen through history.

JERUSALEM: A TALE OF ONE CITY

By Martin Gilbert

On August 18 Yasir Arafat, speaking as head of the Palestinian National Authority in Gaza and Jericho, told Arab youngsters at a summer camp, "Those of you who lit the intifada fire must now act as defenders of this young state, whose capital is Jerusalem. It is Bir Salem [the fountain of Salem]. Salem was one of the Canaanite Kings, one of our forefathers. This city is the capital of our children and our children's children. If not for this belief and conviction of the Palestinian nation, this people would have been erased from the face of the earth, as were so many other nations."

King Salem is a newcomer on the historical scene. No such Canaanite, Jebusite or Philistine king is known to history. No wonder most inquirers into the status of Jerusalem, including the Anglo-Catholic writer Terence Prittie and the Israeli publicist Elyahu Tal, both authors of books titled *Whose Jerusalem?*, start with the historic nature of Jewish, Muslim and Christian links with the city. This is not a mere historical or religious curiosity. As Israel forges ahead on separate peace tracks with Jordan and the PLO, this age-old issue is emerging on the international agenda, despite Israel's insistence that Jerusalem is not negotiable. The signing of the Israeli-Jordanian peace agreement this week and President Clinton's visit to East Jerusalem have led to Jerusalem's being once more on the international agenda.

That Jerusalem is "holy to the three monotheistic religions" is a frequent assertion by those who wish to make the city's future status the subject of negotiation. For Muslims, however, even those who regard the city as theirs from Canaanite times, it is not Jerusalem but the Saudi Arabian city of Mecca that is the paramount shrine. Mecca, not Jerusalem, is the object of the most important pilgrimage a Muslim must try to make at least once in a lifetime.

For Christians, Jerusalem contains some, but not all, of their holiest shrines. In Jerusalem are the reputed sites of the Last Supper and the Crucifixion, the tomb of Jesus, the tomb of the Virgin and the Place of the Ascension. But there are also Christian holy places elsewhere in Israel, among them the birthplace of Jesus (Bethlehem), the scenes of his childhood (Nazareth), the site of his Baptism (by the Jordan River) and the locale of his main preaching and miracles (Galilee).

In contrast, all the main holy sites for Jews lie within the post-1967 municipal borders of Jerusalem. Foremost are the Temple Mount and the Western Wall, both of which came within Jordanian jurisdiction in 1949, and to which Israeli Jews were denied access for nearly two decades. Since 1967, on the other hand, Israel has allowed worshipers of all three faiths unrestricted access to their holy places throughout the city, although Jewish and Christian prayer are barred on the Temple Mount to avoid disturbing Muslim sensitivities.

Jews at prayers all over the world face toward the Temple Mount. Muslims, even those praying on the Mount, face away from it, toward Mecca. Indeed, when they pray on the Mount, they have their backs toward its most splendid structure, the Dome of the Rock, while those praying in the Al-Aqsa mosque also look away from the city and toward Mecca. In the Old Testament, Jerusalem is mentioned on 656 occasions; the city's well-being is central to Jewish prayer. In the New Testament, the city is the scene of the climacteric events of the Christian faith. In the Koran, Jerusalem is not mentioned at all. Later Muslim tradition linked the Koran's reference to *al masjid al-aqsa* (the furthest sanctuary) with the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. But there was no building on the Temple Mount at the time of the Prophet; the Holy Land itself is called the "nearest" elsewhere in the Koran; and the verse is held to refer, in Islamic tradition, to a nighttime ascension to a heavenly sanctuary.

Even though the Jewish religious claim to Jerusalem is persuasive, it is not the religious importance of the city that is truly at the center of the current debate. Rather, the city's status as a national capital is at issue. For Muslims, Jerusalem has never served as a capital. Muslim rule generally is held to have begun in Jerusalem in the year 638. But when Suleiman became ruler in 715, he took as his permanent residence, and

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as the economic and administrative center of the country, not Jerusalem but Ramla, a town he had founded some years earlier for that very purpose. A Muslim resident of Jerusalem complained at the time of the decline in his city's status: "Jerusalem is a provincial town attached to Ramla, having been the seat of the government in the days of Solomon and David."

For Israeli Jews, and for Jews throughout the diaspora, Jerusalem has been neither a provincial town nor a "mere" capital: it holds the central spiritual and physical place in the history of the Jews as a people. It became the capital of the first Jewish kingdom in 1004 B.C., almost 3,000 years ago. With the brief exception of the Crusader period, no other non-Jewish ruling power of Jerusalem made the city a capital; but it was consistently a capital for the Jews. Driven into exile by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C., the Jews returned fifty years later and rebuilt Jerusalem as their capital. It was their capital, too, under the Maccabees. The unity of the city achieved in 1967, then, was more than a quirk of military geography: it was the fulfillment of unbroken historical longings.

No other nation or empire held Jerusalem in such regard. Neither the Egyptian Mamluk rulers from 1260 to 1516, nor the Ottoman Turks, who ruled from 1516 to 1917, even contemplated making the city their capital. Although the British made Jerusalem the administrative seat of the Palestine Mandate in 1922, the location of ultimate authority for Palestine remained in London. At the same time, the British were committed under the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine to help create a Jewish National Home in which, from its inception, all Jewish self-governing institutions were located in Jerusalem.

The sensitivities of both Jews and Christians were trampled on by successive Muslim conquerors of Jerusalem. Churches became mosques. Evil-smelling slaughterhouses and tanneries were set up near Jewish places of worship. Mosques were built close to churches (including the Church of the Holy Sepulchre) and synagogues, their minarets deliberately overtowering them. Sometimes mosques were simply erected on top of churches. During the three decades of British rule, from 1917 to 1948, however, freedom of worship was respected and many new churches, mosques and synagogues were built. But between 1948 and 1967, in a retrogressive move that was to have a long-lasting impact on Jewish fears, the Jordanians excluded Israeli Jews even from the Western Wall.

The Jordanians also denied Israeli Jews access to the fifty-eight synagogues in the occupied Jewish Quarter of the Old City. Indeed, most of these synagogues were deliberately destroyed or vandalized. Jews also were barred from their other holy sites under Jordanian jurisdiction, including the tombs of the Prophet Samuel and Simon the Just; the Jewish cemetery on the Mount of Olives; the tomb of Rachel, on the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road; and the burial site of the patriarchs.

As a result of the war of 1948, both Jews and Arabs lost areas of Jerusalem in which they previously had lived. In addition to the populous Jewish Quarter of the Old City, Israel lost two small residential areas east of the dividing line. Several substantial Arab residential areas came under Israeli control, becoming integral parts of West Jerusalem. The legal status of the divided city was established in a series of unilateral measures and decrees on both sides of the divide. In December 1948 Trans-Jordan annexed all the Arab-held areas of western Palestine, including those parts of Jerusalem that were under its military occupation. East and West Jerusalem had come into being, the creation of war, delineated by cease-fire lines. Shortly after the first Israeli general election in January 1949 Israel established its Knesset in West Jerusalem.

The Israel-Jordan armistice agreement of April 1949 envisaged free Israeli access to Mount Scopus enclave, and also the Western Wall. The Jordanian authorities never allowed this to be put into effect. One reason for Israeli determination not to see the repartition of Jerusalem, or any diminution of Israel's sovereignty over the united city, is the way in which the Jordanian government so rigorously refused to allow the university to function, or the Wall to be visited, despite the armistice pact. These were not marginal border deprivations, but blows at two central facets of Israeli and Jewish life.

During the War of Independence, the Jewish Quarter of the Old City was occupied by Jordan and its inhabitants expelled. With the ending of the war, Israel, in December 1949, proclaimed Jerusalem its capital. The country's Parliament, Supreme Court, Chief Rabbinate and Jewish Agency were among the institutions located there. Across the barbed wire and no-man's-lands that marked the dividing line, Jordanian-ruled East Jerusalem was not made the capital, either for its Palestinian residents or for its Jordanian occupiers. This remained in Amman. The citizens of Israel had no intimate neighboring state to which to turn, and no other city in Israel approaching Jerusalem in spiritual or administrative importance. Just as, during thirteen centuries of Muslim control over the region, no Arab ruler or conqueror made the city his capital, the Jordanian king did not do so either. This was quite normal: no Muslim holy place is today the capital city of an Arab or Muslim land. Tehran, not Meshed or Qum, is the capital of Iran. Riyadh, not Mecca or Medina, is the capital of Saudi Arabia.

Only the Jews regard Jerusalem as both their spiritual and temporal center. (For Christians worldwide, Jerusalem is a spiritual not a temporal realm.) The city is the focal point of Jewish pilgrimage during the three annual "pilgrim festivals," and the one city toward which Jews are enjoined to set their feet as a matter of religious piety, as in the Passover and Yom Kippur invocation, "Next year in Jerusalem."

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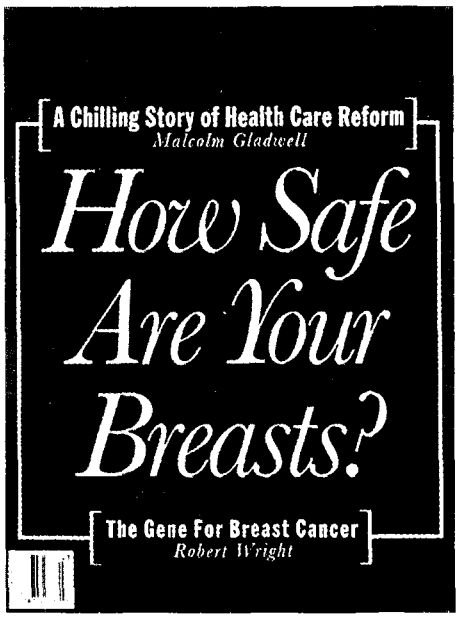
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AND ANALYSIS, GOVERNMENT...AND

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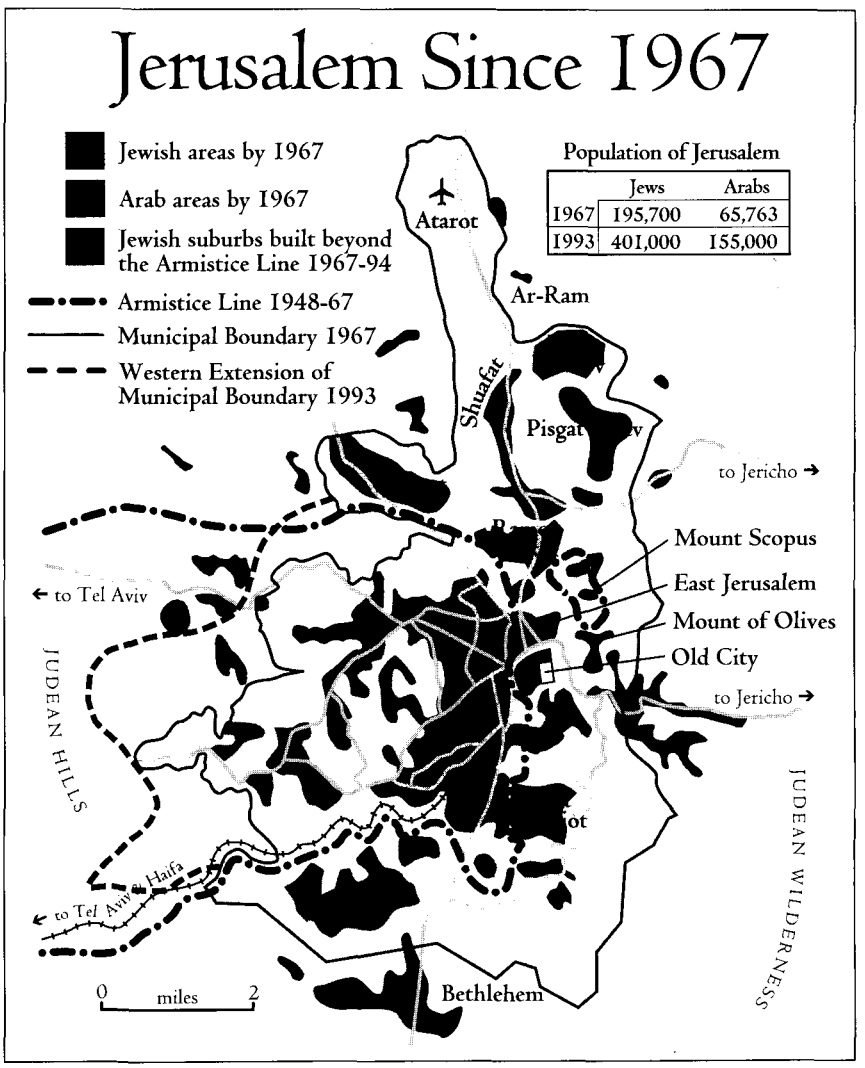
For Jews in all centuries, Jerusalem was a place not only of distant longing but of actual settlement. When the city was declared the capital of the State of Israel in 1949, it already had a substantial Jewish majority. In 1845, more than half a century before the first Zionist Congress in Basle set out the territorial aims of political Zionism, the Prussian Consul in Jerusalem, Dr. Schultze, estimated that there were 7,120 Jews, 5,000 Muslims and 3,390 Christians in the city. From that moment, the Jews were to remain the largest single religious community. Their numerical dominance increased, despite periods of first Turkish and then British restrictions on their entry into Palestine. Two years after Schultze's estimate, a British visitor, Dr. John Kitto, wrote in his book *Modern Jerusalem*: "Although we are much in the habit of regarding Jerusalem as a Muslim city, the Moslems do not actually constitute more than one-third of the entire population."



MAP BY JIM HOLLOWAY FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC
BASED ON A MAP IN MARTIN GILBERT'S *JERUSALEM: ILLUSTRATED HISTORY ATLAS*

In the nineteenth century, Jews came to Jerusalem from distant lands to live as well as to pray. Some worked on farms and in fields on the outskirts of the city. Some taught, some practiced medicine. By 1841 a Jewish printing press had been established, and seven years later came a Jewish bank. For four centuries the Ottomans neglected the city, which was for them a distant provincial town far from the capital, Constantinople, but the Jewish population grew steadily and increased its total percentage. On April 15, 1854, *The New York Daily Tribune* ran an article that declared: "The sedentary population of Jerusalem numbers about 15,500 souls, of whom 4,000 are Mussulmans and 8,000 Jews." The author was Karl Marx. Fourteen years later, the *Jerusalem Almanack*, an early guidebook to the city, listed twenty-one synagogues, twenty-one convents and eleven mosques.

Jewish enterprise after 1860 included a hospital, a library, schools, hotels and commercial houses. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Jews had become the largest builders of suburbs beyond the walls. In 1888 Jews from the Yemen established a quarter in the village of Silwan. Also in 1888 a Jerusalem Jew, Joseph Navon, obtained the Sultan's permission to build a railway to the city. This helped increase the immigrant Jewish population considerably, making the city more accessible to those who landed at Jaffa by boat from the Russian and Romanian Black Sea ports. In 1891 a Scottish Christian visitor, the Rev. Hugh Callan, asked of the city: "What is to be her future? Shall the Russians rule through their Greek Church (as they are like to), or shall the Jews possess her? This at least is sure, while the rest are strangers, the Jews are still the only patriots there."

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the influx Ashkenazi Jews, especially from Tsarist Russia, raised the Jewish population to more than 28,000 in 1896. At that time the Christian Arabs and Muslim Arabs each numbered less than 9,000. The new Jewish arrivals lived mostly in the new Jewish suburbs outside the walls. These suburbs even had their own Jewish post office. By 1914 the Jewish population had reached 45,000 out of 65,000. Only the coming of the First World War halted the continuing demographic dominance of the Jews, many of whom were expelled to Egypt or deported to Turkey.

The Zionists, encouraged after 1917 by the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate, established self-governing institutions in Jerusalem. Despite the Jewish majority in the city, the British chose an Arab as the

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first mayor, and from then on appointed only Arabs as his successors. The growing Jewish presence included the Jewish National Library, the Hadassah hospital and medical center and the Hebrew University, where Winston Churchill planted a palm tree in 1921. Three Jewish garden cities were set up, pioneers of modern suburban planning. But three Arab uprisings within two decades led to the effective separation of Arab and Jewish neighborhoods, including the creation of separate bus routes. Among the Jews murdered by Arabs in 1936 was Levi Billig, an advocate of Arab-Jewish reconciliation. He was in his study working on a medieval Islamic text when he was killed.

British rule brought the amenities of modern city life to Jerusalem, leading to a rise in Arab as well as Jewish immigration. British census reports show that the increase in Jerusalem's population between 1921 and 1933 by immigration amounted to 20,000 Jews and more than 21,000 Arabs. These Arab immigrants came, like the Jews, from distant lands, including Morocco, Algeria, Libya and the Yemen.

In 1938, shortly after Britain raised the possibility of separate Jewish and Arab states in Palestine, the Jewish Agency proposed a partition of Jerusalem itself based on the main areas of urban settlement. In an attempt to create a map that would obtain Arab approval, the agency offered to exclude seven Jewish residential areas from the sovereign Jewish city: the Jewish Quarter of the Old City; Yemin Moshe, founded in 1892; and five post-1920 suburbs in the south, which lay beyond a belt of Arab neighborhoods.

The Arab states around Palestine refused to accept the idea of Jewish statehood and rejected this compromise. A violent decade followed, culminating in the battle for Jerusalem in 1948. At that time, 100,000 Jews and 65,000 Arabs inhabited the city. The Jewish Agency accepted the U.N. plan for a U.N.-administered Jerusalem, calling it a "heavy sacrifice" that nevertheless would serve as "the Jewish contribution to the solution of a painful problem." The Arabs rejected this proposal, too. The U.N. plan contained a proviso that after ten years a referendum would be held to explore the desires of the inhabitants about the future regime of the city. Demographically, this almost certainly would have given the Jews the controlling voice.

Following the battle for Jerusalem, in which Egyptian forces entered the southernmost Jewish suburb, kibbutz Ramat Rahel, a divided Jerusalem emerged, delineated by the cease-fire lines and separated by large areas of no-man's-land. The Arabs lost all their flourishing suburbs west of the cease-fire line; the Jews lost all theirs to the east and north.

In May 1948 Israel declared statehood. The Arab countries denied statehood to the Palestinian Arabs, who did not much protest. Jordan annexed the land not occupied by Israel. Israel built up Jerusalem as a capital, with its parliament building, law courts and government ministries. Because Mount Scopus was surrounded by Arab forces, the university had to build a second campus in the western part of the city. Jordan, despite Palestinian wishes, declined to establish a Palestinian university in Jerusalem. Nor did the question ever arise, during the nineteen years of Jordanian rule, of making East Jerusalem the Palestinian capital.

The population growth between 1949 and 1966 underlined this disparity of interest. The Arab population increased to 70,000. The Jewish population increased to 195,000. This number included many Jewish immigrants from Morocco, Iraq and other Arab lands where they had long been harassed and persecuted.

On July 27, 1953, King Hussein of Jordan declared East Jerusalem to be "the alternative capital of the Hashemite Kingdom." Yet Amman remained the real center of Jordanian rule. When on June 5, 1967, Jordanian troops bombarded Mount Scopus and Ramat Rahel, the die was cast. The Israeli government had urged Hussein not to enter the war. His decision to do so was decisive for the future of Jerusalem and has determined its situation until today.

Within two days of Hussein's troops' opening fire, the Jordanian sector of the city was under Israeli control. The physical barriers were thrown down. "We earnestly stretch out our hands to our Arab brethren in peace," declared Moshe Dayan, then minister of defense, "but we have returned to Jerusalem never to part from her again." East Jerusalem, which constituted one-fifth of the built-up area of the city, was then incorporated by Israel and the city was given new municipal boundaries. New Jewish suburbs were built across the former Jordanian border, the cease-fire line of 1949. An influx of immigrants from the Soviet Union helped populate these new neighborhoods. By the end of 1993, the Jewish population of Jerusalem had risen to more than 400,000, the Arab population to 155,000.

As a result of the policies of Teddy Kollek, the mayor of Jerusalem from 1966 to 1993, facilities were provided for the Arab minority of East Jerusalem far beyond anything introduced under Jordanian rule, including a sewer and piped water system, clinics, libraries, parks and gardens. Access to Israeli hospitals was unrestricted. The Arab neighborhoods also grew in both size and prosperity. The Christian Arab communities declined, however, with many leading Christian Arab families emigrating, as they had in what had been largely Christian Bethlehem, because of Muslim hostility.

The Christian communities inside Jerusalem have suffered throughout the centuries from chronic disagreements among themselves, and from frequent hostility and neglect by the city's rulers. With reunification in 1967, Israel pledged to uphold freedom of access and worship, and this pledge has been kept. The Via Dolorosa is among the city's busiest routes. Christians of every denomination (there are more than thirty in the city) worship at their holy places, which are often divided between two or more denominations, and were

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in the past much fought over, amid blows and curses. Those in search of the Garden of Gethsemane can choose among three different sites, depending on the branch of their faith. Two different sites, one inside and one outside the present Old City walls, are both claimed as the true Calgary. Within the Holy Sepulchre, where the most visited of these Calgarys is located, six separate Christian denominations have their custodians; each has its own altars and places of worship. Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Armenians, Protestants and Copts are the main Christian groups in the city. Each has its own needs, aspirations, properties, leaders and worshipers. For several years a Mormon university has been an impressive feature of Mount Scopus, adjacent to the Hebrew University.

Under Israeli rule, Christian worship is unimpeded. Churches can now be freely built and freely repaired. Outside Christian interests are continually asserted. This summer, the first Vatican emissary to Israel since 1948 asked for special consideration of Roman Catholic needs. Within a month, an emissary from President Boris Yeltsin of Russia pressed the concerns of the new Russia for a voice. Israel responded by agreeing to continue to uphold the needs of all Christian religious denominations. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres informed the Russian emissary that whereas political rights, of which the Russians also had spoken, must be retained by Israel, the spiritual rights of all religious groups would be scrupulously upheld.

Each Israeli government since 1967, while maintaining open access to the holy sites of Christianity and Islam, has been committed to maintaining Jerusalem both as its capital and as an undivided city. Kollek, although no longer mayor, observed in a recent conversation that any division, however amicably achieved as part of a peace negotiation, would still involve demarcated borders, customs posts, check-points and the cutting in half of the city's integrated facilities, including postal, electricity, water and drainage services. Since 1967, however, the American and British governments have continued to take a lead internationally in refusing to move their Israeli embassies to the capital city that they do not recognize. One senior American diplomat was recently refused permission by the State Department to participate in a meeting at the Jerusalem Hyatt Hotel on the grounds that the hotel was located in East Jerusalem; it was in fact a few yards inside the Jordanian side of the 1949-1967 line. On April 27 of this year, a letter from the Downing Street office of the British prime minister stated that "the British Government does not recognize Israeli sovereignty over any part of Jerusalem." The British ambassador to Israel later explained that what Britain did recognize was that Israel "exercises de facto authority in West Jerusalem." As far as Britain and the United States are concerned, Israel has neither de jure authority in West Jerusalem, nor de facto authority in East Jerusalem, where since 1967 it has been considered the occupying power.

This summer's Rabin-Hussein agreement in Washington confirmed the special position of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan with regard to the Muslim holy places in the city. The Israel-Jordan agreement was formally signed on October 26 in the presence of President Clinton. Yet also this summer, Palestinian Arab leaders, meeting at Orient House in East Jerusalem throughout this year, indicated by their very meetings the Palestinian desire to see East Jerusalem as their capital. This desire was only articulated for the first time twenty-five years ago, after the unification of the city under Israeli rule. Now it has become a staple of Palestinian rhetoric and actions. Thus, the August Palestinian Pharmaceutical Conference, convened outside Jerusalem, held its final session in a hotel in the city.

Under its Muslim name, Haram esh-Sharif, the Muslim, as opposed to Palestinian, focus on Jerusalem, is on the Temple Mount. This summer, King Hussein, flying over Jerusalem from west to east as a gesture of Jordanian-Israeli friendship, circled the Mount. Seventeen years earlier, Anwar Sadat had gone to East Jerusalem and prayed on the Mount before addressing the Israeli Parliament in West Jerusalem. Shortly after Sadat's visit, a distinguished Israeli public servant, Walter Eytan, advocated giving the Mount "to an Arab sovereign as his wholly sovereign territory." Eytan was convinced that "unfettered Arab sovereignty" over the Mount was the only solution for the Jerusalem problem, and he suggested "a unilateral, unsolicited offer."

Does such an idea have to be at variance with practical politics? In Madrid in 1991, the Israeli government headed by Yitzhak Shamir declared that the future status of Jerusalem was not negotiable, and that the city would remain the "undivided" capital of Israel. This policy was reiterated by Yitzhak Rabin's government after it came to power in 1992. Yet there are many scenarios whereby Israel retains sovereignty over the whole city, while the Muslim holy places keep their already substantial autonomies, which could be enhanced, even to the extent of a Walter Eytan-style Arab sovereignty over the Mount itself. At the same time the predominantly Arab residential neighborhoods could be closely linked administratively and economically with the Palestinian National Authority, without any derogation of Israeli sovereignty. It should not be beyond the wit of good constitutional and international lawyers to devise such a scheme.

On August 17 Peres and chief PLO negotiator Nabil Shaath agreed that Israel would transfer control of education of Palestinians throughout the West Bank to the PLO before the start of the school year. This agreement was carried out two weeks later, on September 1. Given political progress elsewhere, it could be extended to the Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem without affecting Israeli sovereignty, while at the same time enhancing Arab self-government and self-esteem. The agreement

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signed on August 24 by Israel and the Palestinian National Authority (the Early Transfer of Authority Agreement), is leading, even as I write these words—and despite the recent spate of Hamas terror—to the Israeli government's transfer of authority throughout the West Bank of Palestinian control over education, health, tourism, social affairs and taxation, the so-called Early Empowerment. The area covered by this wide-ranging and historic agreement actually includes the populous Jerusalem Arab suburb of Ar-Ram, which, while situated alongside the city's north-south highway, lies in fact just outside the post-1967 municipal border. Nor has Israel ever sought to incorporate this suburb within the city border. Indeed, the first and only Israeli extension of the Jerusalem municipal borders since 1967, announced a little more than a year ago, was limited to land in pre-1967 Israel.

A pattern for Jerusalem's future may be seen in Israel's present willingness, despite earlier reluctance, to permit several aspects of Palestinian national activity to be directed from East Jerusalem, and to allow leading members of the former enemy, the PLO, to visit Jerusalem to pray on the Temple Mount and to conduct negotiations in the city. If the pace and direction of the current autonomy agreements is maintained, there ought to be a political way forward that could satisfy both Israeli and Palestinian aspirations, while maintaining the current growth and expansion of all neighborhoods. Jerusalem both East and West could remain the capital of Israel, a shared city under Israeli sovereignty, with no internal borders. Within a united Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty, the East Jerusalem Arabs could obtain such status and self-governing instruments, and administrative and even political links with the Palestinian Authority, as to satisfy their emotional and practical desires for a capital of their own. This would be in addition to their existing, and increasingly self-governing, large urban centers of Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem and Hebron.

Meeting in Vienna early this year, Israeli and Palestinian officials exchanged views on "the future status" of Jerusalem. On August 16 these talks were resumed in Casablanca, and a week later moved to Marrakesh. They have not been widely publicized or dramatically promoted, but through them may emerge a political formula, and a reality on the ground, acceptable to both sides. That reality need not be based on repartition of the city. Most Arab areas are adjacent to Jewish ones, some closely so, but not enmeshed with them. Jewish and Arab activities proceed alongside each other, on parallel rather than intertwined paths.

The pattern of urban settlement is intricate, but not inextricable. In the north of the city, beyond the substantial Arab suburb of Shuafat, lie the Atarot industrial zone and the Jerusalem Municipal Airport. It is not acceptable to Israel, nor is it in the realm of reality, that this or any other Jewish suburb built across the 1967 cease-fire line be excluded from Israeli Jerusalem, nor need it be for Arab aspirations to be satisfied. The Palestinian Arabs of Jerusalem do not need sovereignty to flourish: a sovereign Israel is already ensuring that it can be an effective master in its own house, with considerable building, intellectual and commercial activity, newspapers and services. It was in fact not Israel but Yasir Arafat who recently closed down Jerusalem's most independent-minded Arab newspaper.

As the sovereign power, Israel can offer an enlightened rule that is the envy of many cities in the Arab world. It also can offer close links to the growing Palestinian autonomy immediately beyond the municipal border. All sorts of ideas can be floated: were, for example, the suburb of Ar-Ram to become the location of the Palestinian capital, it would be within the built-up area of Jerusalem, and yet outside Israel's sovereign area. Despite the reluctance of the outside world to recognize Israel's sovereignty over the current municipal boundaries of Jerusalem, such sovereignty serves as a basic protection for Israel, not only to maintain the unity of its capital, but also as a safeguard against those terrorist elements that would disrupt the peace process, and the peace itself.

Today, as for the past twenty-seven years of the reunited city, the Jewish and Arab communities of Jerusalem live virtually separate lives. Some points of physical contact exist: hospitals, museums, the lobbies of hotels and an increasing number of social welfare and charitable institutions. The summer of 1994 saw a joint Arab-Jewish performance of *Romeo and Juliet* in the city. But this does not add up to the mixing or even overlapping of the communities. West Jerusalemites rarely visit the Arab residential neighborhoods on a social basis, and vice versa. Shopping, eating out and recreation are seldom across the divide. Neither side has much idea, if any, of the daily life of the other, of the urban developments across the invisible border or of needs and desires beyond the undemarcated divide. Perhaps in this very separation, topographical and social, may lie the best hope for the peace, growth and prosperity of a permanently united city. United means, in this perspective, united within the borders of Israel. For the Palestinian Arabs of East Jerusalem to live under Israeli sovereignty, as they have done since 1967, is not unlike the situation in many capitals and large cities throughout the world, where minority groups have a respected, protected and independent place within a wider sovereign entity. Muslims in Delhi, Christian Copts in Cairo, Hong Kong Chinese in Vancouver, Russians in Kiev and Kharkov, and Hindus in London and Leicester are among those who seek not political independence but the right to participate and contribute as equal and respected citizens. Such an approach can certainly offer a bright future for the Arabs, both Muslim and Christian, in East Jerusalem. Given the facts on the ground, not just of the past twenty-five years but of the past century, and also the very different meaning of the city to Jews and Arabs, participation and contribution may also be the best the Palestinians can achieve. •

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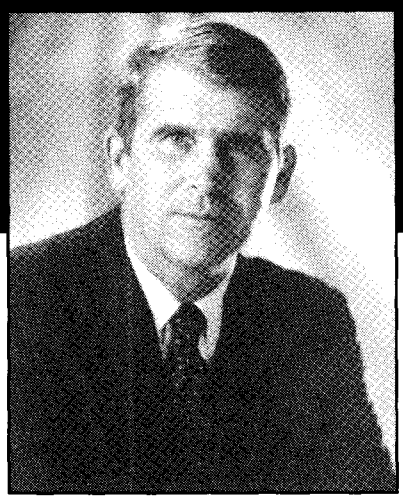

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Shooting Up

By now everybody knows that Quentin Tarantino is the happiest man in the world. Not so many years ago he was a clerk in a California video store, devouring film film film. Then he tried to break into filmmaking himself, first by writing scripts. It took years to get in. But those video days and the buff-dom of his boyhood sustained him, and now he is where he dreamed of being. He is making the films that will stock those video stores. Some younger aspirant will sell Tarantino tapes.

About his grit and passion, no question. About his achievements so far, some doubts. His first film was *Reservoir Dogs,* which drew particular attention because of its tidy frame and its offhand violence, but which seemed to me shrewdly opportunistic—a subject and style carefully chosen by a man who wanted to get into filmmaking, who had tried various keys in the lock and had at last picked the right one. Then, along with other work, he wrote a story that Oliver Stone used as the basis for *Natural Born Killers.* (Composers often write virtuosic variations on simple tunes.) Now comes his much-trumpeted second film.

Pulp Fiction (Miramax) is *Reservoir Dogs* rewarded. Because of the first film's success, the second had a larger budget, thus has greater length, more stars, more lavish production, more violence—and certainly more room for the blackish humor that was visible in Tarantino's first. But, like the first film, *Pulp Fiction* revels in an underworld of menace and violence, of crime as cosmos, of sleaze. Tarantino of course wrote his own screenplay, and he tries to license his moral locale with an opening title that quotes two dictionary definitions of pulp. The first one is literal; the second is the figurative usage, derived from magazines of the past that were published on cheap pulp paper and specialized in lurid fiction of several genres.

He interweaves three stories. The film opens in a diner. A pair of petty crooks, played by Amanda Plummer and Tim Roth, after some dejected conversation decide to change their luck by robbing the very diner in which they are sitting. Just as they pull their pistols, we shift to the second story. John Travolta and Samuel L. Jackson are hit men for a drug czar, on their way to a hit. They converse casually, like telephone repairmen on their way to a routine job. They arrive where they're headed and do their killing.

That evening Travolta, under orders from his boss, escorts the boss's wife for the evening—dinner and dancing. The wife is Uma Thurman in a black wig. (A reference to Louise Brooks? Jeanne Moreau in *The Bride Wore Black?*) Thurman's greed for drugs complicates Travolta's evening with her.

The third story concerns a boxer, Bruce Willis. That same drug czar, Ving Rhames, apparently a heavy bettor, orders Willis to take a dive in the fifth round of an upcoming fight. Willis double-crosses him. This leads to his pursuit by the czar, more killing and the capture of both the boxer and the czar in a homosexual S&M den. (By now—no, before this—we are ticking off the film sources that Tarantino has been remembering.)

A further episode involves several of the above people—and Tarantino himself, passable in a small role—with Harvey Keitel, who repeats his performance in an earlier film as an efficient clean-up man for hit men in trouble. The picture closes at the diner where it began. Travolta and Jackson arrive just as Plummer and Roth stick it up. (There's a time bend here—one of the picture's better gimmicks. We already know the fate that awaits Travolta elsewhere.)

At the center of most of the action—actually, it's just off-center—is a black attaché case, highly valuable for some unrevealed reason. Whenever it's opened, it lights the face of the person looking in. (Derived, perhaps, from the mysterious box in Buñuel's *Belle de Jour.*)

In one tangential way, Tarantino resembles recent Woody Allen: almost every one of his characters is a (presumably deliberate) cliché. The exception is in a flashback, a Marine officer just returned from Vietnam—and he's not really a character, just one long deadpan comic speech, laid in like a mosaic by Christopher Walken. All the others are familiar: the portentous gang chief, the workaday hit men (one of whom quotes the Bible), the pug with a streak of sentiment and so on.

Some of the action strains belief in a picture that dwells mostly in the naturalistic realm. On her night out, Thurman takes a life-threatening overdose of heroin, is revived at someone's house with a jolt of adrenalin straight to the heart, then is taken home by Travolta and

FILMS WORTH SEEING

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dropped off as if it had been an ordinary date. I suppose there's meant to be some burlesque edge to this sequence, but even so, it's pretty farfetched. More matter-of-fact glitches: guns are fired in residential areas, and no neighbors seem to hear them. Willis kills a man, wipes the gun free of his fingerprints and then puts his prints on a doorknob. During the diner holdup, a couple of dozen people are ordered to lie on the floor. Not one of them makes a sound or a move—they become cardboard cut-outs—during long conversations among the principals.

Travolta, only seventeen years after *Saturday Night Fever*, has lost his looks but not his appeal: he is still quietly, modestly engaging. Jackson grows as he goes, a solid actor. Willis proves again that, when he has something other than an action-film dummy to play, he can act. Thurman is better as this tough cookie than as her usual Miss Winsome; still, it's hard to believe that she's an object of desire. Rhames, her husband, has taciturn depth. Plummer and Roth are beneath comment.

The designer, David Wasco, gave the settings the right gloppy postcard look, which Andrzej Sekula's camera exploits. Karyn Rachtman's music track buzzes the picture along very helpfully. And there's no doubt that director Tarantino's long film immersion has given him the eye and ear to do what he wants to do here—not only to pack the punch of the good Hollywood crime directors but to tease out the backhand sting that some of them had. Perhaps in the future he'll emulate other kinds of directors and films.

Meanwhile, however, what's most bothersome about *Pulp Fiction* is its success. This is not to be mean-spirited about Tarantino himself; may he harvest all the available millions. But the way that this picture has been so widely ravened up and drooled over verges on the disgusting. *Pulp Fiction* nourishes, abets, cultural slumming.

So much of what inundates us these days—in film, in various kinds of pop music—is calculated grunginess, of climate and temper. So much of what goes on in (what I hear of) rock music revels in the lower end of every kind of spectrum, grungy ideas and diction delivered by grungy people. So much of modern film seems to compete in grunginess. Very little of this stuff seems to have anything to do with the lives actually lived by its avid public. Most of it seems designed as guided tours of an underworld for people otherwise placed—career-oriented students, job-holding others. Escapism always has been one function of theater and film, and for ages it was cloyingly pretty-pretty. Boy, has the pendulum swung. •

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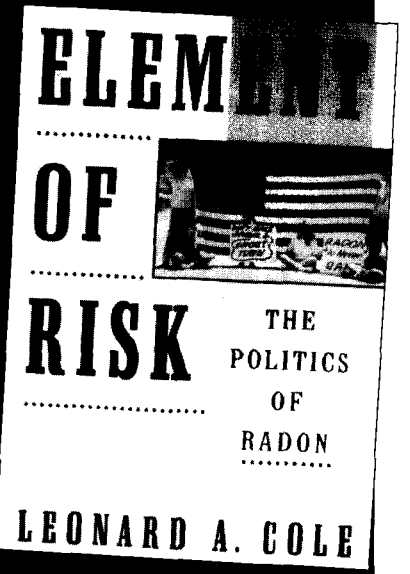

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Jed Perl on Art

Twombly Time

The idea that art began when somebody impulsively scratched something on a wall will do just fine as a creation myth for painters. Why that first artist made that first mark, however, is subject to as many different interpretations as there are times when artists have thought about the origins of art. In the late 1700s, when European painters were on the verge of a century of realist revolutions, some artists were attracted to a Greek legend that stated that the inventor of painting was a woman, a Corinthian maiden who decided to trace the profile of her soon-to-be-departed lover on a wall. This story, which combined a classical setting, a romantic sentiment and a realist impulse, suited an age that occasionally could weld such apparently divergent sensibilities into bold historical drama. But in more recent times, when abstraction rather than imitation has been the artist's defining experience, the origin myths that have interested people have had a less clear-cut narrative.

Henri Focillon, the French writer whose 1936 essay "In Praise of Hands" came out of the expressionist impulses of early-twentieth-century European art, pushed the beginning back from Corinth to the Age of the Titans. He suggested that what was essential was not hand-eye coordination, but the hand's inherent capacities—its delicate yet forceful muscularity and its tactile sensitivity. Focillon imagined a centaur in a forest, and how, while moving along on his four hooves, the mythological beast would be "inhaling the world through his hands, stretching his fingers into a web to catch the imponderable." "The hand's trials, experiments and divinations," Focillon believed, were still going on in artists' studios in the twentieth century. And when Focillon's essay appeared in New York in 1948 under the imprint of the art book publisher Wittenborn, there was a New World audience that was primed to receive the message that the magic is in the making.

It has been just about fifty years since Focillon's essay appeared here. That is both a very long time and a very short time so far as art is concerned, and even though the idea of the artist as a magician has been attacked from every imaginable angle in the past several years, it remains the only myth by which anybody who goes into a studio and gets down to work on a regular basis can seem to live. Artists still believe that the impulse to make marks predates the impulse to represent, and they have made painterliness the Manhattan version of naturalness—a naturalness that can be turned to contradictory ends, and that often seems, even when it is ignored or attacked, to be honored in the breach. In the past year we have seen a number of museum retrospectives in which contemporary artists are intent on demonstrating that in the beginning and in the end there is nothing but the mark. These shows—devoted to Robert Ryman, Willem de Kooning and now Cy Twombly—have underlined both the potency of a great origin myth and the dangers in store for any artist who expects a limited definition of painting to be relevant to the far-from-limited number of situations that present themselves over a lifetime of work.

For the next few months, more than a few people are going to look to the retrospective of paintings by the 66-year-old Cy Twombly, which is at the Museum of Modern Art, for their working definition of painterliness. Twombly likes a classical association, and he probably wouldn't mind our imagining that in more than a few of his canvases a centaur had done some finger painting. That Twombly has often made his painterly marks with pencil or crayon doesn't suggest a rejection of the painterly gesture so much as the relevance of that mark to a range of unconventional situations. Twombly is saying that he's painting even when he's not painting. There are classical titles and inscriptions derived from Greek and Roman writers scattered through the work of this artist who has made his home in Italy since the late 1950s. These antique allusions give his late modern improvisational manner, with its big expanses of empty white canvas, a feeling of being grounded in the white marble landscape of classical legend. Twombly gives the impression that he's a contemporary artist with fine premodern credentials.

The Twombly retrospective has been organized by Kirk Varnedoe, the chief curator of painting and sculpture at the Modern. For Varnedoe it may prove the triumph that has eluded him until now: a contemporary show that the sophisticated SoHo audience takes absolutely seriously. The downtown audience felt coopted rather than confirmed by Varnedoe's last major exhibition, "High & Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture"; and the only recent Modern show on a contemporary theme that has received a warm welcome downtown is "*Dis*locations," the anthology of installations that was organized by Robert Storr. In Twombly, Varnedoe has found a big-name artist whose ability to be both unabashedly lyrical and dryly ironic about his own lyricism defines, through its very paradox, haute taste in 1994. The trendy types who pooh-pooh the show are probably feeling that Twombly is too close for comfort. Varnedoe has had the instinct to see that Twombly's charm rests in his not resolving a paradox so much as he enshrines it. The big museum audience may swallow Twombly's anomalies as just one more example of the modern artist's endless capacity to offer bafflement as a form of entertainment, but for the insider audience that lives for a paradox, the Twombly show is the tip of an iceberg.

Chronologically, Twombly's brand of painterliness comes a generation or two after de Kooning's (whose retrospective, which opened last spring at the National Gallery, currently is playing opposite Twombly's at the Metropolitan) and perhaps half a generation before Robert Ryman's (whose retrospective was at the Modern a year ago). Several shows that appear on the horizon at roughly the same time occasionally add up to a wide-angle view; that's certainly the case with these three retrospectives. Set between de Kooning's tapestry richness and Ryman's white-on-white endgame, Twombly, whose work has not been seen all that much in New York in recent years, may be seized on as a missing link.

De Kooning, who at 90 is no longer painting, used to handle a paint-saturated brush with more wit and elegance than anybody else in America. Twombly didn't study with de Kooning, but de Kooning had taught at Black Mountain College in North Carolina before Twombly got there, and the Dutchman's work was, of course, a major influence at the school. There is no mystery as to why de Kooning's essential subject, which is the individualism of the brushstroke within the pluralism of the painting, has such an all-American appeal. Precisely, however, because the drama in de Kooning's paintings is so dependent upon the friction between the brushstrokes, there is little chance

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that those individual marks will ever cede their autonomy in favor of the wholeness of a painting. No life-work based on the cult of the brushstroke can match the brilliance and the fascination of de Kooning's. But the preoccupation with passagework over broad compositional movements led to a diminishment in de Kooning's work by the late 1950s, and at that point Twombly kicked in with his own take on de kooningesque diminishment.

Twombly offers a museumgoer a lot more than Ryman, whose white brushstrokes are so evenly inflected that every mark is canceled out by every other one, having the result of leaving a viewer feeling becalmed. An artist who marshalls his slim painterly resources as rigidly as Ryman must have some inkling of the numbing effect that his work is going to have on many museumgoers. The off-putting regularity of some of the later galleries in the de Kooning retrospective suggests that even an artist of infinitely greater gifts cannot expect the most beautiful brushstrokes to sustain our interest over the course of a long career. Twombly joins a studied severity that is not unlike Ryman's to a giddy painterliness that is not unlike de Kooning's, and brings out a strain of coolly nihilistic painterliness that runs straight through fifty years of the School of New York.

The Twombly show is deftly done. There are eight galleries, and they add up to a fluid, unforced view of the career. Varnedoe does not present more work than a museumgoer can be expected to take in at one go. Although his catalog essay presents a careful, chronological view of the career, the show suggests that the way to understand Twombly is in terms of a cyclical, rather than a linear, development. A small repertoire of themes and motifs, almost all of them in place very near the beginning, have been reappearing for more than forty years. Twombly's most ardent fans may leave the retrospective feeling that they would like to see more, which is not the worst feeling to have at the end of a big show. Those who don't care for the work will find that they've reached the end of the show before they've reached the end of their rope.

Twombly is a good painter, and he knows, or at least he used to know (in the first part of his career, up until the mid-1960s) how to maximize his gift for deft, elegant effects. Looking at these sand- and snow- and ivory- and slate-colored paintings, a museumgoer takes in one incident and then another incident, and there's pleasure to be derived from the sensitivity with which Twombly engraves a pencil line into thick paint or twirls together little puffs of pigment. He can be interpreted as a textbook example of late modern Expressionism. (The living painters who end up with retrospectives at the Museum of Modern Art are often the ones whose work appears to have an educational purpose.) Twombly presents self-conscious awkwardness as virtuosity, he uses substructures as surfaces, he asks the part to stand in for the whole. All of these are familiar, and in some cases downright venerable, modern techniques. Especially in the paintings of the mid-1950s, Twombly makes good use of an image that is derived from de Kooning: the stroke that turns abruptly at a ninety-degree angle, and in the act of "bending over" creates a hairpin turn in space. In space-making terms, this is the most that Twombly ever manages to do. But the paintings are full of small, beguiling effects. All the writing and the poetry add another dimension to the mix, although I think that Twombly scribbles more words in his hard-to-parse handwriting than most people are going to want to take the time to read.

Courtesy Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Blanchette Rockefeller Fund

THE ITALIANS (1961)

Twombly sees a painting as an idiosyncratically ornamented surface. This sort of surface, somewhere between a notebook page and a graffiti-scarred wall, was already in danger of becoming overly self-conscious when Miró was doing his emptied-out picture poems in the 1920s. Twombly's rectangle of canvas, with the weave of the fabric either showing or covered over by a thick layer of white or gray paint, is a bulletin board on which the artist posts lots of messages. (The gray paintings with white lines from the 1960s have been referred to as chalkboards or blackboards, for obvious reasons.) Among the cryptic-and-not-so-cryptic messages that Twombly includes in his paintings are classical place names and pornographic squiggles. All announcements, he seems to suggest, are equal.

There's taste and intelligence and wit to these canvases, but there is no heedlessness. Twombly knows how to scatter bits across a big surface, he understands how to crowd things for an effect, and he knows how to adjust the rhythms. Yet the experience of the paintings remains additive—that's the biggest problem with the work. The painters who give us an experience of magical amplitude find ways to make their effects expand almost geometrically; they convince us that the world they've created is somewhat beyond their control, that two plus two equals a lot more than four. Twombly never manages to make that happen. His paintings are designed, not composed.

It doesn't help that Twombly is no colorist. There is some variety to his palette, and he's certainly attuned to the individuality of the patches of pigment that he arranges on a canvas, but he doesn't know how to orchestrate colors. For most of the show, he makes a virtue of this liability; only in the last few rooms does he attempt some color combinations that are really beyond him. In the recent "Four Seasons" cycle, Twombly wants to learn a thing or two from the late Joan Mitchell, but his juxtapositions of yellow and blue and purple and green have no impact. The work doesn't take off. The key to Twombly's small poetic originality rests in the way that he isolates each element. Even when he overlaps things—a crabby scrawl, a doodle of paint—each bit retains its cool, stand-alone personality. The self-consciousness of this work makes a museumgoer feel self-conscious. A day or two after you see the Twombly show, what you may recall is all the care-

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ful looking that you did rather than anything that you actually saw.

Visitors to the Twombly exhibition at the Modern—and anybody who's been reading about Twombly in the press—will quite naturally wonder why it is that so much attention is focused on a particular artist at a particular time. The retrospective provides an occasion, but of course some retrospectives garner more attention than others. In Twombly's case the avidity with which he and his work are being examined suggests something about the mysterious movements of artistic sensibility. Transformations in taste may appear to be shaped by the people in the museums and the auction houses and the blue chip galleries. But as often as not, taste percolates upward, with ideas and apprehensions that first take hold in the studios of a considerable number of artists somehow finding their way into the wider world. While fashion can be a crude but useful barometer of evolutionary trends and geological shifts in the thinking of artists, there are transformations that occur over periods of years and even decades with a slow-moving force that the audience, if it's overly concerned with what's happening this month or this season, will be hard put to comprehend.

We didn't need a Twombly retrospective or a de Kooning retrospective to demonstrate that these veteran artists are on a lot of younger artists' minds. Even without the shows, it's abundantly apparent that 1950s-style painterliness is resurgent. In part it's a generational thing. Artists in their 40s are fascinated by the mid-century years; they feel an almost magnetic pull back to the world as it was when they were very young. There have been months in New York when, between the shows at the Painting Center, Andre Zarre, 55 Mercer and a number of other downtown galleries, it's been clear that the impact that de Kooning's bravura brushwork had on Twombly and countless artists who were exhibiting along 10th Street in the 1950s has reappeared, phoenixlike, in the SoHo of the 1990s. Some of this may be copycat stuff; a lot of it is much more than that.

Painthandling has become such an issue among the artists that, for the first time in anybody's memory, New York has a hometown brand of pigments that rivals the best produced in Europe. And make no mistake about it: when artists are going back to basics in the studio, the repercussions are going to be felt way beyond the studio. Materials matter, and even non-artists know it. At the de Kooning retrospective at the Metropolitan, museumgoers are taking a long hard look at the color photographs of de Kooning's paint table that have been installed in the galleries: they want to see how it's done. Today a lot of artists are doing it with Williamsburg Paint, the brand that's favored by Bill Jensen, Brice Marden and is now sold from a street-level store on Elizabeth just below Houston. This is the kind of spare, unprepossessing retail shop—with artists' exhibition announcements posted all around on the walls—that people don't believe can make a go of it anymore. The entrepreneur behind Williamsburg Paint is a painter named Carl Plansky, whose first show at 55 Mercer in 1992 contained some thickly worked landscape-based semiabstractions of a fairly high caliber. A gallerygoer who'd seen Plansky's debut show (despite the falling off in a second show a year later)—together with a number of other distinguished exhibits, most recently Temma Bell's at the Bowery Gallery and Paul Resika's at Salander-O'Reilly (both last May)—could well ask why anybody imagines that virtuoso painthandling is not alive and well.

But there is reason for concern. For every painter who handles a brush eloquently there is now another painter who is glad to make a joke of that kind of virtuosity. Painthandling has always defined the New York School, much as color was the defining experience for Venice and composition was for Paris. But for artists the question isn't how painterly painting looks in the gallery; it's what they can do with it in the studio. Twombly's way of treating the canvas as a page in an aesthete's journal is something that artists can pick up on. His version of flatness gains unexpected implications in the work of Joan Snyder, who gives diaristic painting a more explosive, heart-on-the-sleeve character. And Carroll Dunham's paintings, in which comic-book-bright color and psychedelic imagery achieve some elegance and weight, are rather like Twombly's Delphic pronouncements translated into New Yorkese. But there is a new kind of painterly painting—the kind of brushwork on dry ice that Fiona Rae does—that's so arch and jejune that it deserves to be taken no more seriously than the beatnik styles that are surfacing in the downtown clubs. Some of today's Twombly-watchers aren't all that different from today's archeologists of the Beat movement—some may even regard Twombly as the Paul Bowles of the visual arts.

Today's painters have one fundamental choice: their brushwork can be honest or their brushwork can be ironic. Yet when Twombly, who is being granted old modern master status, airily sweeps aside the concept of choice in favor of the possibility of being all things to all people, he's hailed for giving downtown pluralism an aristocratic sheen. The hip audience regards painting with such ambivalent skepticism that it can hardly tell the difference between the ambiguities and the ironies that are built into a painting and the ones that they project onto a painting. Gallerygoers may read the ebullient passages in the canvases of Joan Mitchell as ironic high spirits, and perhaps there is something to this interpretation of the work of the Abstract Expressionist who died in 1992 with her reputation soaring. It's also possible to discern an element of irony in middle-period de Kooning, where he occasionally appears to be gently satirizing the heaviness of his own earlier work. But when we talk about Mitchell and de Kooning we're talking about the gambles of artists who, whatever their limitations, can construct a painting in which irony is one element in an emotional equation.

Twombly, unlike many of the Young Turks who take him for their old master, knows how to express dispassion with a little painterly passion. When he evokes Mitchell in some of his passages of full color, he may not make the allusion work for him, but he is acknowledging that a painter has some options. As an accompaniment to the Modern show, the Gagosian Gallery, in its elegant made-over garage on Wooster Street, is presenting an enormous three-part painting by Twombly. He worked on this untitled fifty-two-foot-wide painting for fifteen years and finished last spring. It's an engaging composition—a sort of guide to Twombly's predilections. Moving from left to right we pass through a landscape of choices. There's the land of no color, there's a broad plain crossed by thickets of lines and inscribed with the words "The Anatomy of Melancholy" and there's a grand burst of fireworks in orange and violet and yellow. This painting embraces several different moods, yet it's so large and spare a work that each mood is wrapped in its own aureole of skepticism. Twombly's triptych reminds us that the use of a painterly mark to shatter the illusions without which painting cannot live isn't something that was dreamed up by today's just-out-of-art-school skeptics. There are old skeptics, too.

Much of what is best and worst in this old skeptic's mature achievement can be traced back to Twombly's Black Mountain College experience. I should say that when I speak of Black Mountain, I am not necessarily thinking of the college as it is

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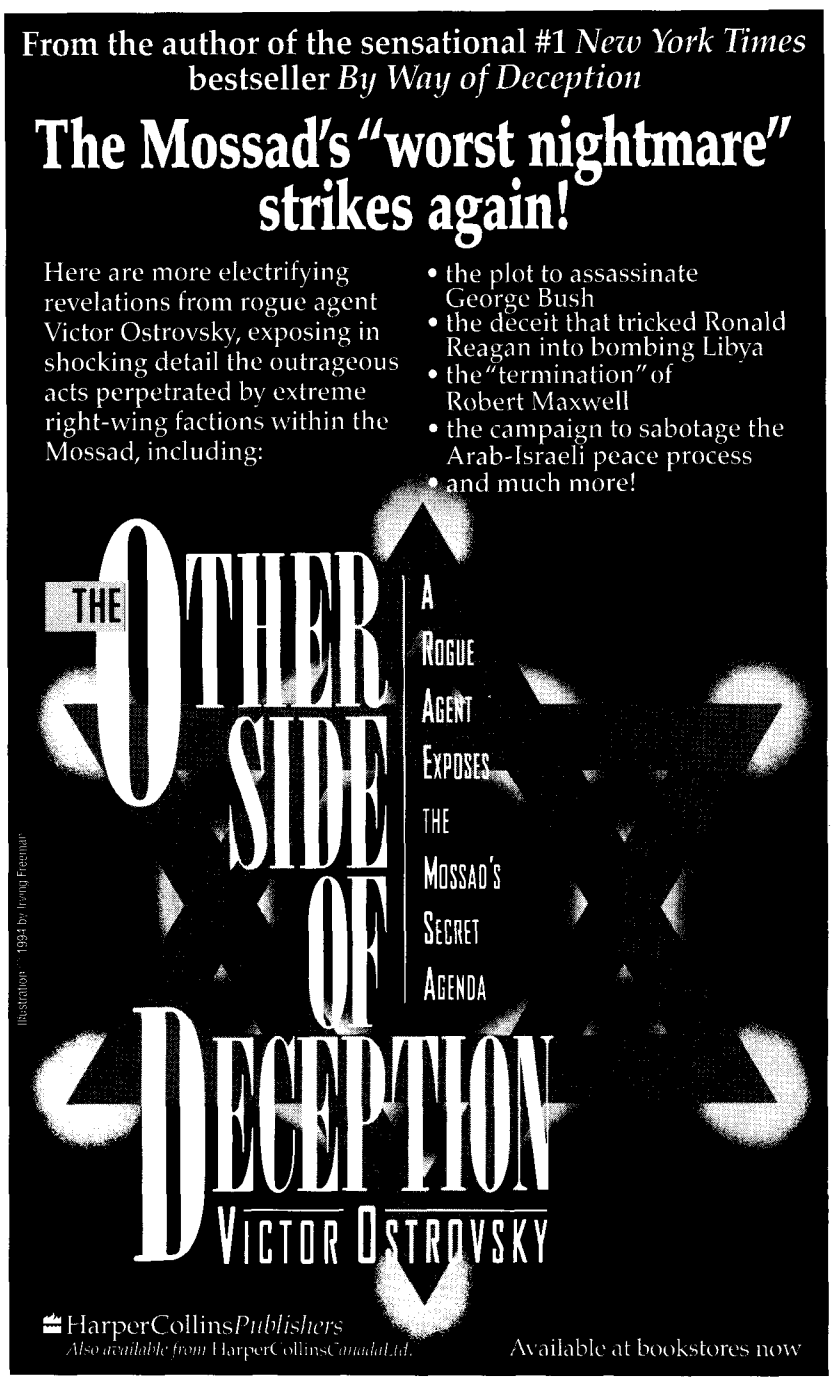
described by historians, but as it lives on in the imaginations of artists. Twombly, after all, was there for not more than a year. Black Mountain, no matter how long ago it closed its doors, endures as a tradition—a myth, if you will, by which artists live. And there's another tradition that was born in that period by which artists are still living. It's the Hofmann School (where Joan Mitchell studied for a time). At Black Mountain, painting had less to do with an immersion in the studio than it had to do with a painter's effort to synthesize all kinds of avant-garde activity and in general open up the studio to the world; some people still believe that's what a painter does. At the Hofmann School, painting was presented in a very different way. When you studied with Hans Hofmann you learned that you could go into the studio and express anything that you knew about the world through the dynamism of the composition, the weight of the color, the liveliness of the brush. Some people still believe that, too.

Twombly's attitude toward the classical past—his creation myth, if you will—has everything to do with Black Mountain relativism. He is surely capable of understanding antiquity as a fairly solid arrangement of literary and artistic monuments, but what attracts him about those monuments is the extent to which time has wreaked changes on them rather than the extent to which they have remained the same. There are no absolutes in this view of history. The most beautiful line of poetry can be a fragment—orphaned words. The most beautifully painted passage on the walls of Pompeii is fascinating because it has been ravaged by time. To be interested in the pastness of the past is a perfectly natural attitude for an artist, but it is by no means the only viable way to approach the past, and it is certainly a view that's irreconcilable with Hofmann's belief in the immediacy of painterly expression. Pompeii, alive for Twombly, is alive for other kinds of artists as well. Six months ago, a few steps from where Twombly is now showing his mural painting at Gagosian, Temma Bell, in her exhibition at the Bowery Gallery, seemed to simply pick up where the Pompeiian painters had left off. Bell is a painter who has no interest in historical relativism; she's involved with a completely different tradition than Twombly. If he's Black Mountain, she's Hofmann School.

The key to Bell's off-handed lucidity is her immersion in an idea of calligraphic realism that she finds equally alive in the art of ancient Pompeii, Renaissance Venice, Corot, Dufy and Giacometti. Twombly has his own calligraphic method, but it is a critique (and not always a persuasive critique) of old drawing styles. For Bell, painterliness isn't a parodoxical modern position; it's just the thing that painters do. In Bell's show the walls were packed, almost wallpaper-like, with paintings of upstate New York, and the artist took in everything: rolling hills, fields, trees, fences, barns, houses, animals, figures. She presented it all with a flowing, comic-elegant speed that we know from some of the great Pompeiian wall paintings. Not every painting reached the high level of the fifty-eight-inch-long "From Tree to Trees," but the attack of Bell's brush always had a definiteness that Hofmann would have approved. Although Bell is too young to have actually studied with Hofmann, I imagine that he would also approve of the way that she strengthens her grip on the present by assimilating the experience of the past. Twombly, ever the son of Black Mountain College, positions himself in the present by giving a riveting late modern austerity to each thought that he has about the past.

What an artist makes of painting is not so much a matter of freely choosing among a variety of options as it is a matter of making the most of a few intuitions that are absolutely one's own. Every time a painter paints, we want to see what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those intuitions are. To paint is to show your hand. It is left to the audience to decide whether the way the artist handles paint reveals unselfconscious virtuosity, a canny imitation of virtuosity, or an inability to achieve any level of virtuosity. Perhaps it all comes down to a question of taste. New art very often challenges and even confounds taste, but what the rules of the game are (or ever have been) has become so obscure that the question of whether willed inauthenticity can be a new kind of authenticity can scarcely be addressed. The audience has a hard enough time recognizing the old kind of authenticity. Twombly rather plays into all these confusions.

There is a debate going on which is basically about the status of painting in a time when photography is dominant. This debate is as old as photography itself, but it does seem to be heating up right now. Today's museumgoer frequently learns about painting, and keeps abreast of developments in the visual arts, by looking at photographic reproductions. This makes it difficult to evaluate a painter's work. The actual surface of a painting, of any painting, with its uneven texture, can seem like a bad parody of the real thing, if the real thing is the seamlessness of a photographic print. Painting has been looking problematical for so long that it has come to the point where every time a painter paints, somebody thinks that painting is on trial. Artists may reject the prosecutorial spirit, but in recent seasons there has been a whole slew of highly regarded theme shows that amount to art-world trials in which the real painterliness faces off against the mock. And what better place to seek a verdict than New York, the city that gave us the last unambivalent definition of painting fifty years ago?

Cy Twombly is the type of painter that the Museum of Modern Art has liked for a long time: a Dadaist in Classicist's clothing. Both the Dadaists and the Classicists among New York artists, however, may find that Twombly's victories are, for the most part, too easy. In the galleries of New York City, the wars between the Dadaists and the Classicists, who are also the Black Mountain people and the Hans Hofmann people, rage on. Market forces may be with Twombly, but market forces are not the be-all and the end-all. That elegantly scribbled world of Twombly's is one opinion about what 1994 thinks that 1950 thought about 50 B.C. Artists, often close-mouthed in public, are vehement when they get to work in their studios. They have their own opinions about what the recent past is telling them about the distant past. And why not? What is at stake is nothing less than the creation myths that artists are living by. •

Toil and Trouble

BY STEPHEN GREENBLATT

Witches and Jesuits: Shakespeare's "Macbeth" by Garry Wills

(Oxford University Press, 223 pp., $19.95)

On November 4, 1605, the night before King James I, his family and his ministers were due to appear in person to open a new session of Parliament, officers of the crown apprehended an English Catholic named Guy Fawkes in a cellar that extended beneath the Parliament House. The cellar was loaded with barrels of gunpowder and iron bars, concealed by a load of lumber and coal. Fawkes, who had served as a soldier in the Spanish army in the Netherlands, was carrying a watch, slow matches and touchwood. He intended to put into execution a desperate plot devised by a small group of conspirators, embittered by what they perceived as James's unwillingness to extend toleration to Roman Catholics. The paradox of scheming to blow up the entire government in order to bring about a kinder, gentler nation will be a familiar one to anyone who has read a newspaper in the late twentieth century.

The king's officers were not in the cellar by accident. In late October the government had been alerted to the conspiracy when Francis Tresham, one of the plotters, sent an ambiguous letter to a friend, Lord Monteagle, urging him to avoid attending the king at the opening of Parliament. Monteagle immediately showed the letter to Robert Cecil, the king's principal secretary, who showed it in turn to several members of the Privy Council. According to one official account, *A Discourse of the Manner of the Discovery of the Powder-Treason*, the councillors initially were inclined to dismiss the letter as a scurrilous satire, a "pasquil" written by a disgruntled fool. They pointed to the absurdity of one sentence in particular that seemed to them to call the seriousness of the whole letter into question: "the danger is past so soon as you have burnt the Letter." How, the councillors asked, could the danger be over once the letter warning of it was burned?

If the author of the warning was in earnest, surely he would have understood that the danger was independent of the fate of this piece of paper. Still, the letter made them uneasy, and the "experience they had of his Majesty's fortunate Judgment in clearing and solving of obscure riddle and doubtful mysteries" led them to show it to the king. The perspicacious king, after reading and rereading it, said that "the Style of it seemed to be more quick and pithy, than is usual to be in any Pasquil or libel." This canny stylistic analysis—an answer to anyone who questions the immense practical value of literary criticism—led James to suspend any impulse to dismiss the letter as the work of a crank and to scrutinize a sentence the councillors had skimmed too quickly: "they shall receive a terrible Blow this Parliament, and yet they shall not see who hurts them."

He conjectured that the words were referring obliquely to the blowing up of gunpowder; the victims would not see the person who hurts them, the king said, since the deed could be performed by "one base knave in a dark corner." In the light of this interpretation, the sentence that the councillors had dismissed as absurd—"the danger is past so soon as you have burnt the Letter"—should be reconsidered. The phrase "so soon as" had a double sense: it looked like it meant that the danger would cease once the letter was burned, but its hidden meaning was that the danger would occur as quickly as a letter would burn. It was then another covert warning that someone was going to set off an explosion. All that remained was to find "the owner of that hand," as the discourse puts it, "which should have acted that monstrous Tragedy."

Case solved. Or it was solved, rather, when the owner of the hand in question, Guy Fawkes, was caught in a dark corner, hauled off to prison and tortured until he revealed the details of the plot and the names of his confederates. Those who were not killed while resisting arrest were tried and executed, along with Fawkes, on a scaffold erected opposite the Parliament House. Their severed heads were displayed on pikes.

This was not the first time that James had narrowly escaped assassination. In 1600 he almost had fallen victim to the

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Gowrie Plot, a conspiracy to kidnap and quite possibly to kill him, undertaken by the sons of an earl that he had executed early in his reign as king of Scotland. Here, too, there was an official account that celebrated James's wisdom and courage, an account that in this case included charges of black magic. The corpse of one of the conspirators, cut down by the king's rescuers, mysteriously would not bleed until James himself discovered in the dead man's pocket a "close parchment bag." The bag was said to be "full of magical characters, and words of enchantment, wherein, it seemed, he put his confidence." When it was removed, the dead man's blood immediately gushed forth.

Black magic was an explanation more agreeable to the government, of course, than the Presbyterian opposition that was widely rumored to be the real force behind the Gowrie Plot. That the king's enemies were in league with Satan conveniently confirmed the king's claim to be God's anointed. It is not surprising, then, that the powers of darkness repeatedly turn up in official accounts of the conspiracies against James, or that prosecuting attorneys and preachers at the time describe the Gunpowder Plot less as a political act than as a metaphysical one, a plan masterminded by the Evil One himself. In the list of questions that James drafted to put to Fawkes, the king refers in what is probably more than a metaphorical sense to the plotter's "devilish preparations." It is not surprising, too, that the king and his ministers immediately conjectured that Fawkes was a Catholic priest (he was not) and suspected that they would find behind the conspiracy the Devil's favorite agents, the Jesuits.

The plotters had disclosed their intentions, in fact, in sacramental confession to two Jesuits, Fathers Greenway and Gerard. Both escaped to the continent. Under seal of confession Greenway had in turn spoken of the plot, by which he was horrified, to Father Henry Garnet, the learned, resourceful and immensely courageous head of the Jesuits in England. Garnet, indirectly implicated by a letter found in Fawkes's pocket, was caught, sent to the Tower of London and put on trial in March 1606. Garnet could not disclose anything that was said to him in Confession, but he declared that he, too, was horrified by the plan and had tried to put a stop to it. He admitted that early in July 1605, he had a conversation with Robert Catesby, the chief conspirator, in which Catesby asked him whether it was lawful to undertake something for the good of the Catholic cause if it should not be possible to avoid the destruction of some innocent persons together with the guilty. Garnet had answered in the affirmative—how often has the church or state ever answered no to such a question?—but said also that he did not understand its application.

This theoretical exchange was used in court as the principal "proof" of Garnet's complicity in the plot, a proof all the more palatable to public opinion since Garnet was considered a master of the art of "equivocation." Indeed, he wrote the book on the subject, a book whose original title makes clear its central argument: *A treatise of equivocation wherein is largely discussed the question whether a Catholic or any other person before a magistrate being demanded upon his oath whether a Priest were in such a place may (notwithstanding his perfect knowledge to the contrary) without Perjury and securely in conscience answer, No, with this secret meaning reserved in his mind, that he was not there so that any man is bound to detect it.* By employing a "secret meaning" or, as it was often called, a "mental reservation," morally scrupulous people could give misleading answers under oath without violating their conscience. With such a doctrine, prosecutors said, Garnet could swear anything he wanted, and consequently nothing he said in his defense should be believed. He was found guilty and sentenced to be drawn, hanged, disemboweled and quartered.

A few years before these momentous events, a company of London actors experienced what was for them an important change in their legal status.

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—***Booklist***

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On May 19, 1603, a scant two months after the death of Queen Elizabeth and the accession of King James, the Lord Chamberlain's Men were declared by letters patent to be the King's Servants and Grooms of the Chamber:

> Know ye that We ... do license and authorize these our Servants Lawrence Fletcher, William Shakespeare, Richard Burbage, Augustine Phillips, John Heminges, Henry Condell, William Sly, Robert Armin, Richard Cowly, and the rest of their Associates freely to use and exercise the Art and faculty of playing ... when the infection of the [bubonic] plague shall decrease, as well within their now usual house called the Globe within our County of Surrey, as also within any town halls or Moot halls or other convenient places within the liberties and freedom of any other City, university, town, or Borough whatsoever within our said Realms and dominions.

The Lord Chamberlain's Men had become the King's Men.

The players had every reason to be grateful to their royal master and attentive to his pleasure and his interest. It has long been argued that one of the most striking signs of this gratitude is the tragedy that their chief playwright probably wrote for them in 1606. That play is *Macbeth,* based on a story from Scottish history particularly apt for a monarch who traced his line back to Banquo, the noble thane whose murder Macbeth orders. As so often with Shakespeare, we do not have a secure date for either the composition or the first performance of the play. The first printed text is in the 1623 Folio, brought out by his fellow actors Heminges and Condell seven years after Shakespeare's death.

Why, then, is the play usually dated 1606? The principal reason is a joke made by the drunken porter who is roused in the middle of the night by a knocking on the gate of Macbeth's castle. As the grumbling porter slowly goes to turn the key, he imagines that he is the gatekeeper in hell, opening the door to new arrivals. "Here's an equivocator," he says of one of these imaginary sinners, "that could swear in both the scales against either scale, who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to Heaven: O come in, equivocator." As early as William Warburton's 1747 edition of Shakespeare, this treasonous equivocator knocking on hell's gate has been identified as an allusion to Henry Garnet, recently tried and executed.

Scholars and critics have long followed Warburton's lead and patiently teased out the relation between *Macbeth* and the momentous events of 1605-1606. The great editor Edmond Malone in the late eighteenth century suggested that *Macbeth* might have been one of three plays performed at court when James's royal father-in-law, the king of Denmark, paid a state visit in 1606. Others have combed the text for possible allusions to the Gowrie and Gunpowder Plots, carefully analyzed Shakespeare's use of his chronicle sources and speculated on the play's conformity with James's own vision of the sanctity of royal authority. Of all of Shakespeare's major tragedies, *Macbeth* always has seemed the most topical, and the most manifestly ideological. "All who desired either to gain Preferment or not to lose it," wrote Samuel Johnson in 1745 in his *Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of 'Macbeth,'* knew that flattering his speculations was "the ready way to gain K. James's Favour." *Macbeth* has been described repeatedly as if it were a piece of inspired prince-pleasing.

There is rarely absolutely fresh news in Shakespeare studies. Observations made 250 years ago are made again, then half-forgotten, then rediscovered, then put to bed only to be roused once more. This critical history need not be as stale and as dull as it sounds, in part because familiar things begin to look unfamiliar with time, and in greater part because the plays are astoundingly, uncannily fresh. Garry Wills has discovered that there is a relation between *Macbeth* and the Gunpowder Plot, and he has written a book to explore it. The point is not all that different from one made many times before, but Wills writes with clarity and liveliness. His book will appeal to readers who are interested in a more historical Shakespeare, and are understandably impatient with the theoretical complexity, moral ambivalence and interpretive subtlety of so much recent academic Shakespeare criticism. If you enjoy reading about the Bard, but want an account virtually untouched by deconstruction, psychoanalysis, feminism, cultural materialism or new historicism, to name a few of the viruses that have shaken the intellectual system in recent years, you will find this an altogether agreeable book. You will also, I think, find it difficult to understand why *Macbeth* has outlived the reign of the king whom it flattered.

Wills's argument is that *Macbeth* is a highly topical play, one of a series of responses—other plays, ballads, sermons, official reports and so forth—that flooded the country after the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot. That event, Wills argues, was, like Pearl Harbor or the Kennedy "execution" (as he calls it), a trauma that defined the psychic life of the nation and that shaped its language. A still more telling analogy, he suggests, would be a trauma that we were mercifully spared (but that may, with a different cast of characters and ideology, be just around the corner).

Suppose that at the height of the cold war a Communist cell were caught in the act of trying to explode an atomic bomb under the United States Capitol on a day when the president was addressing a joint session of Congress. Suppose, too, that the president played a crucial role in deciphering the clue that led to the foiling of this dastardly plot, a clue that had baffled the FBI and CIA. And suppose that the security services (partially redeeming their earlier failure) turned up a secret Communist handbook, a guide to treason, written by the most dangerous traitor of all, an American fanatically devoted to the service of the unscrupulous foreign power behind the whole chilling plot. That, in Wills's view, is the best way we can conceive of the shocking magnitude of the events of 1605. The next step—though Wills himself is too sensible to take it—is to imagine the movie, with James Stuart (played by—who else?—Jimmy Stewart) set against the demonic pair, Guy Fawkes (Robert Mitchum) and Henry Garnet (Ronald Reagan, the great equivocator).

There was no Jacobean version of this imaginary movie because the government would not allow it. The theatrical censors generally would not permit direct representation of any living figure with power or any contemporary public event or controversy. This did not mean, of course, that plays did not speak to the burning issues of their times. It meant only that playwrights and audiences developed a heightened sensitivity, equal to that cultivated in the old Soviet Union and East Bloc countries, to Aesopian indirection. Daniel Javitch suggested some years ago that absolutist paranoia and censorship were on the whole good for Renaissance literature, since they made everyone much more alert to the subtleties of language. Very little could be said in a straightforward way, but that made for a more interesting game. You could not re-enact the Gunpowder Plot on stage, but you could use terms like "mine," "plot" or "blow" and expect your audience to get the point.

Wills finds many such allusions in plays from 1606-1607 by Thomas Dekker and Barnabe Barnes, and he finds them as well, if more sparsely, in *Macbeth.* After all, Macbeth refers to the regicide he is contemplating as a blow—"that but this blow / Might be the be-all and the end-all"—and he worries that, if he murders

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the king, cherubim "Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye." If "blow" is the "grassy knoll" of its time, then the audience would automatically think of the Gunpowder Plot.

It is not, of course, a matter of diction alone. Wills identifies a set of motifs that recur in Gunpowder Plot texts: a linking of political assassination with witchcraft, the devilish plotting of Jesuits and systematic lying (equivocation). His strong claim is not that there are passing allusions to the Plot, but that *Macbeth* is altogether structured by it. The nation was saved by the providential wisdom of James I who was suspicious of the terms of an intercepted letter: that is, cunning evil was defeated by a kind of counter-cunning. Wills argues that Macbeth is a figure for the demonic evil associated with the Gunpowder Plotters and that the virtuous Malcolm is a figure for the counter-cunning of James. And exactly as the Plot was repeatedly described as service to the devil, so Macbeth is himself identified with witchcraft, since he participates in a scene of necromantic prophecy, presided over by Hecate, and hence has sold his soul to the devil. Indeed, according to Wills, Macbeth "is one of the great male witches of drama." Lady Macbeth, too, is closely associated with the witches, though "she never became a witch, like her husband." To do so she would have had to enter into a pact with the devil, something we are never shown, but she certainly "entertained witch fantasies," and that is enough to link her to the whole structure of a "Gunpowder Play."

The strength of this argument, according to Wills, is that it enables us to save the play. It is not entirely clear to me why he thinks it needs saving. He argues that modern performances of *Macbeth* often have failed and that "its unhappy stage history has created a legendary curse on the drama." But he offers no evidence that modern performances of this tragedy are notably less successful than performances of *King Lear* or *Othello*. And that legendary curse—the reason that superstitious actors refer to it only as "the Scottish play"—has nothing to do with failed performances. As Marjorie Garber has shown, it has to do with a long-standing sense of something disturbing, uncanny and dangerous about the tragedy.

Wills observes that successful modern adaptations of *Macbeth* have often made heavy cuts in the play's second half, presumably because political and military struggles are less interesting to modern audiences than the scenes of witchcraft, temptation, marital intimacy and murder that dominate the first half. He wants us to grasp that the play does not properly fall into two halves, the first eerily sacred, the latter grimly secular. Rather, in keeping with the political theology of the age, the whole of the play is suffused with fear of witchcraft and diabolism. "I shall adopt, as a working hypothesis in this book," he declares, "the view that Shakespeare was not a bungler." No one is going to give him a big argument on that one.

If we see the tragedy as integrated by its topical obsession with witches and Jesuits, Wills suggests, we will be able once again to mount successful productions of it, productions that will reflect the symbolic values that are lost when we take a secular view of the play's politics. How would those values be represented? Wills's grand idea—"it astonishes me that no one has suggested" it, he writes—is that when in Act v, preparing for battle, Macbeth says to an attendant, "Come, put mine armour on. Give me my staff," he is calling for his "magic staff." Eureka! What is a witch, after all, without a magic staff?

The problem with this is not only that it is lame and silly, but also that it misses precisely what has made *Macbeth* so hauntingly powerful for almost 400 years. The play's force is precisely bound up with the fact that Macbeth is *not* a witch, or rather that you cannot tell where the boundaries lie between sacred and secular, natural and demonic, reality and representation, truth and theater. If the audience knew securely how to place Macbeth, how to explain his motives and comprehend his actions, then it would be watching Wills's cold war melodrama and not Shakespeare's tragedy. For though there is an unmistakable allusion in the Porter's drunken speech to Father Garnet, there is in the play no international Jesuit conspiracy run from the Vatican to make Macbeth's choice comprehensible; and though there are the unforgettably weird bearded hags on the heath, there is no clear causal link between them and the stabbing of the sleeping Duncan.

"What are you?" asks Macbeth when he first encounters the "weyward Sisters," and he receives in reply his own name: "All hail, Macbeth." Banquo urgently renews the inquiry, asking the creatures before his eyes if they truly exist or are only figments of his fantasy, but his question, too, remains unanswered. When Macbeth and Banquo demand to know more, the witches vanish: "what seemed corporal melted / As breath into the wind." "As breath into the wind": *Macbeth* is a play of meltings, category confusions, liminal states. These states, and the reactions that they

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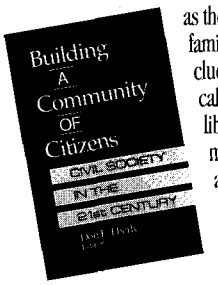

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provoke in readers and audiences, have been recently the subject of brilliant studies by Stanley Cavell, Harry Berger Jr., Stephen Booth, David Norbrook and others; they have been analyzed from the deconstructive perspective of Jonathan Goldberg, the psychoanalytic perspective of Janet Adelman, the new historicist perspective of Steven Mullaney and the cultural materialist perspective of Alan Sinfield. With the exception of Mullaney, whose important work is buried in a long footnote on equivocation, virtually none of this scholarship and criticism is reflected in Wills's book. He is not obliged, of course, to enlist behind any of these banners, or to take literary criticism at all seriously; but the risk of ignoring most contemporary thought about the play is amply demonstrated in his book's two-dimensional blandness.

This book is an exercise in the old historicism, highly reminiscent of Lilian Winstanley's book *Macbeth, King Lear, and Contemporary History* of 1922. By identifying the historical background of a work of art, by nailing down the allusions and gesturing toward the context, the author hopes to put the work in its place, and to settle its meanings. The circumambient texts that Wills cites could be shown to be genuinely fascinating, but they are not given sufficiently pressured readings to become compelling in themselves, or to illuminate *Macbeth* in any very interesting way. They are fixed features in a tiresomely predictable political landscape. What might have been a study in radical contingency, an exploration of the complex interplay of art and politics, is something else: a stilling of disturbance, a vulgarization of tragedy by its reduction to political propaganda. "Do I make *Macbeth* too weird?" Wills asks near the end of his book. The answer is, not nearly weird enough.

"There's no art / To find the mind's construction in the face," says the baffled Duncan about a man who had betrayed his trust, but Macbeth confronts a deeper perplexity, an appalling mystery within himself:

> My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
> Shakes so my single state of man, that function
> Is smothered in surmise, and nothing is
> But what is not.

Wills wants us to see Macbeth as an evil wizard, complete with magic cloak and staff. What we see instead is psychological, political and moral torment, without the consoling answers offered by the Jacobean church and state.

The witches have something to do with this torment, but what that "something" is remains as elusive as the dagger that Macbeth sees before him, handle toward his hand. Scotland is sick, "almost afraid to know itself," but the sickness cannot be isolated in a conspiracy of witches or knaves in dark corners. If there is sexual disturbance out on the heath, where the bearded hags stir the ingredients of their hideous cauldron, there is deeper sexual disturbance at home, in the intimacy of the marriage bond: "When you durst do it, then you were a man." If violence stirs in the hinterlands, where marauding armies struggle, it breeds more murderously still in the innermost circles of the state: "This castle hath a pleasant seat," says Duncan, going unwittingly to his death, "the air / Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself/Unto our gentle senses." If the mind is subject to "supernatural soliciting" from some bizarre place, it is gripped still more terribly and irresistibly by "horrible imaginings" from within.

That Shakespeare locates the deepest horror within the illusory security of marriage, the state and the psyche does not exclude the topical references and ideological conformity that interest Wills. The King's Men knew perfectly well that James had an interest in the supernatural; the king had published a learned book on demonology and frequently meddled in investigations of witchcraft accusations. Shakespeare also could have learned something about James's tastes from the events reported in a lurid little pamphlet published in England in the 1590s called *News from Scotland.* But a glance at the pamphlet suggests that Shakespeare and his company might have had a more complex and independent attitude to the official line than Wills imagines.

In 1591 a Scottish maidservant named Geillis Duncan, who had a reputation as a remarkable and generous healer of the sick, was suspected by her master for that very reason to be a witch. Grievously tortured, she refused at first to confirm the charges against her. But when a "diligent search" of her body disclosed the devil's mark upon her—a tiny spot like a mole where she had allowed a demon to suck her blood—she confessed that "all her doings was done by the wicked allurements and incitement of the Devil," and she implicated several other women, along with one man, a schoolmaster named Doctor Fian.

The schoolmaster proved to be a recalcitrant case. When the king perceived "his stubborn willfulness" in refusing to confess, he commanded that Doctor Fian be hideously tortured and then executed. But Geillis Duncan was more compliant: brought before the king, she re-enacted the witches' Sabbath that her accusers said she had attended. As the king watched "in a wonderful admiration," the servant girl played a song on a "Jew's trump" and performed "the said dance before the King's Majesty, who in respect of the

Poem for a New Year

Love that a reign of terror struck dumb,
love that, respectful, close and clinging,
never could match the thrill of distance,
  come away from the stunted creatures;
show me your stumps and teach me why they
never grew into hands with fingers;
envy the things my feet do; tell me
  how to enjoy familiar features.

Winter that blew in like a rumor,
blew in and dragged us out of houses,
turning us into living ghosts who
  wandered around the city grieving,
win back your ruined reputation:
blanket our crimes with tender flurries,
blow back our hair and freshen it with
  patterns of ice beyond believing.

Ivy that sprouted when the cord broke,
sprouted like some old curse and soon had
people inside a haunted mansion
  walking around in savage dazes,
grow as enormous as you want to
but for the sake of comforting, not
trapping the foes who pace the carpets:
  mimic their networks, not their mazes.

Year that looms just around the corner,
looms like another chance at freedom,
study the past and know it cold, but
  feel no compulsion to repeat it:
menacing drifts of snow don't last here,
grunts of determined doubt won't work here;
when a new hand or challenge grabs me
  may I robustly, fondly meet it.

Rachel Wetzsteon

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strangeness of these matters, took great delight to be present."

There is an oddly similar performance in *Macbeth*, but if James recognized the similarity, he might not have been convinced that the play was altogether flattering. The witches dance to delight a "great King," but the king in question is not the virtuous Malcolm, it is the evil Macbeth.

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Worlds Within Words

BY ROGER SHATTUCK

A Throw of the Dice: The Life of Stéphane Mallarmé by Gordon Millan

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 389 pp., $35)

In the figures of Tennyson and Browning in England and Hugo in France, romantic poetry traveled a long distance from its origins, in nature and in feeling. All three poets died around 1890, and with them disappeared much of the authority of poetry as a public voice. The developments that followed have given us the word "Symbolism," and they arose primarily in France. Like the discovery of the calculus, the revelation happened twice, independently, and in close succession.

In 1867 a 25-year-old *lycée* teacher in the provinces wrote a pair of letters reporting on an intense spiritual and artistic crisis over the past year. "My thought has thought itself through.... I have died perfectly.... Having felled God, I still have to look in a mirror to think.... I have become impersonal." Then, in 1871 a 17-year-old *lycée* student in the provinces wrote a pair of letters about his spiritual and artistic crisis. "It is false to say: I think. One should say: I am thought [*On me pense*] ... *I* is someone else." Each of these young men was describing a partially induced fission of the self, the breaking apart of a consciousness no longer sustained by religious faith. Each of them went on to cultivate this crisis as his conversion, his ordeal and the principal subject of his poetic work.

The first of them was Stéphane Mallarmé, who already had been recognized and published at 20, though his career as a poet smoldered on underground until the 1880s and '90s. The second was Arthur Rimbaud, the Mozart of modern poetry, who burned out in three dazzling years before he was 20 and abandoned literature for exotic languages and gunrunning in Abyssinia. Their method of highly individualized impersonality entered the mainstream of European poetry through the loose movement that came to be called Decadence, which was the reverse side of Symbolism. It is also significant that "The Drunken Boat," Rimbaud's earliest major work, was about a hallucinatory, catastrophic, yet somehow triumphant sea voyage. It matches "A Throw of the Dice," Mallarmé's great final work, which was laid out like a musical score to represent the immense sidereal shipwreck of poetic thought in the vacant ocean of the cosmos. With dramatically contrasting temperaments and careers, these two poets unwittingly collaborated to turn poetry toward the undermining of ordinary language and the cultivation of mystery and indirection.

It is also possible to make the case that these poets provided two of the strongest and most nefarious influences on modern literature. "Man may be democratic, the artist, taking another role, must remain aristocratic," wrote Mallarmé, "... poets, you have always been proud; go further, become disdainful." Mallarmé published this manifesto, "Art for All," when he was 20. He believed that the cult of art is best expressed in works wrapped in obscurity, so as to dissuade the uninitiated reader. Under the influence of Poe's writings about literary composition, Mallarmé turned away from Romantic inspiration and cultivated poetry as a hermetic and self-conscious craft. And he moved beyond Poe toward a looking-glass phase of writing, in which every poem takes as its subject the composition of that poem. Mallarmé helped to lay the groundwork for the self-reflexive dogma that until recently hung like a cloud over contemporary literary criticism. For some readers, these Mallarméan traits condemn poetry to an intellectual narcissism far removed from its true purpose.

Hyperbole! de ma mémoire
Triomphalement ne sais-tu

Te lever, aujourd'hui, grimoire
Dans un livre de fer vêtu!

Car j'installe, par la science,
L'hymne des coeurs spirituels
En l'oeuvre de ma patience,
Atlas, herbiers, et rituels.

Hyperbole! from my memory
Triumphantly can you
Arise, today but a gramarye
In an iron-clasped book!

For I install through science
The hymn of spiritual hearts
In my patiently elaborated *oeuvre*,
Atlas, herbal or ritual.
(translated by Gordon Millan)

How does one begin to read such hermetic lines? A century ago French critics were already attacking Mallarmé with ferocity. They mocked him as a mystifier and a charlatan, a High Priest of the Void. "Complete eclipse of the French language, of lucidity, of common sense!... Look, just take a hat, throw into it adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, nouns, adjectives, pick them out haphazardly and write them down: there's Symbolism for you." This accusation by Leconte de Lisle, the chief poetic voice of the Parnassian school of poetry, was repeated almost verbatim twenty-five years later by the Dadaists as their battle cry. Both de Lisle and the Dadaists were wrong: the Symbolists were serious artists, not public pranksters. Their seriousness did make them vulnerable, however, to some wonderfully high-spirited pastiches and hoaxes, such as *Les Déliquescences d'Adoré Floupette* (1885), which parodied the jargon of poets like Mallarmé so resourcefully that many read it as a contribution to the new style.

The case against Mallarmé as a rarefied aesthete and an obscurantist thinker is not entirely trumped up. It sheds some light on why he was a disastrously ineffectual and boring classroom teacher of English in a succession of schools; but it also fails to reveal the genuine qualities of the man and the artist. The opposite of a self-absorbed *voyou* like Rimbaud, Mallarmé was devoted to his German wife and two children, held an onerous job for thirty years and sacrificed much of his most precious resource—time—to his friends.

His often unbuttoned letters display the unflagging stoicism of a studious poet. He deserved the love and the respect that he inspired. This upright citizen had too few skeletons in his closet to pique our prurience. (The best one can trot out is a late, fleeting and discreet adultery with Méry Laurent, the celebrated model of his close friend Manet. Afterward they remained chaste compan-

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ions for ten years, until his death.) Sometime around 1880, Mallarmé began to keep up with his friends and admirers by receiving them in his tiny apartment in the Rue de Rome on Tuesday evenings for a smoke and a grog and literary conversation salted with lots of gossip. These meetings were not monologues. Mallarmé may have floundered in the classroom, but literary manuals like to treat *les mardis de Mallarmé* as the last great literary salon of Europe.

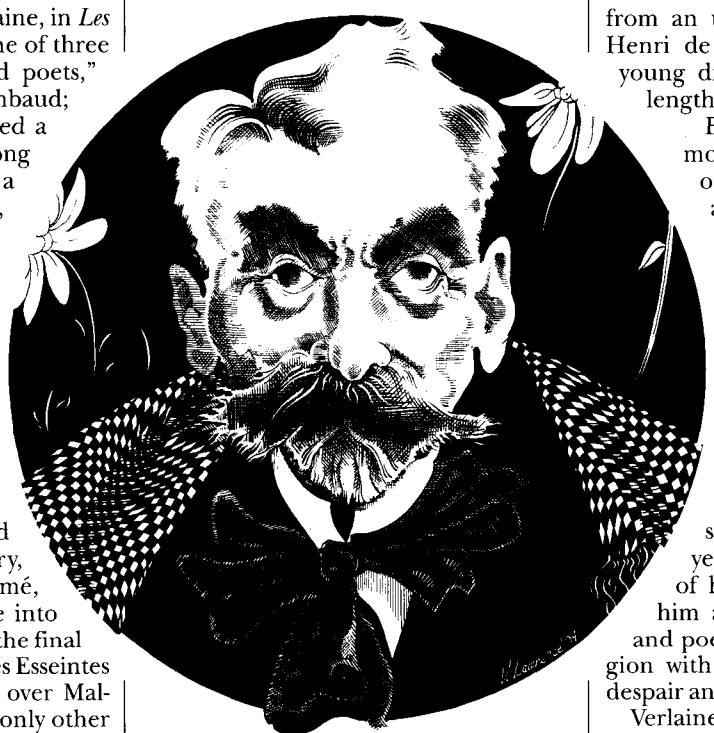
Fame came to this mild, friendly writer in two stages, both of them closely implicated in the origins of what we now call modernism. In the spring of 1884, by which time his writing had appeared only in reviews, two books almost simultaneously identified Mallarmé as the leader of a new literary movement. Verlaine, in *Les Poètes maudits*, chose him as one of three "absolute poets" or "accursed poets," along with Corbière and Rimbaud; his essay on Mallarmé included a number of new poems and a long autobiographical letter. And a few weeks later J. K. Huysmans, a naturalist writer and therefore a dissident, published *A rebours* (*Against Nature*; or *Against the Grain*), the novel that is now considered the masterpiece of Decadence.

In its fourteenth chapter, Huysman's jaded aristocratic "hero" des Esseintes brushes away all the great works of nineteenth-century literature, except two personally printed and bound collections of poetry, and they are both by Mallarmé, whose distillation of language into symbol and silence represents the final stage of literary Decadence. Des Esseintes smiles in exhausted pleasure over Mallarmé's slender volumes. The only other moment in the book when he smiles comes when he discovers the ultimate refinement for nourishing his delicate digestive tract: three peptone enemas a day. The two episodes furnish the "crowning points" of this experimental novel.

Seven years after these two books turned Mallarmé into a celebrity, the literary scene had become sufficiently agitated and polarized around Symbolism and Naturalism to require what we would now call a survey. The journalist Jules Huret interviewed sixty-four writers of all categories for the daily *L'Echo de Paris*. When Huret brought the interviews out as a book, he did not conceal his distaste for the vanity, the jealousy and the egotism of most of his subjects. Still, Mallarmé's patient, good-natured answers made his interview the most informative in the volume. And the index revealed that he was one of the most frequently mentioned authors, ahead of Hugo and trailing Verlaine and Zola.

A few years later, when Verlaine died, Mallarmé was informally elected Prince of Poets. Mallarmé finally published two collections of his writings, retired from teaching in 1892, encouraged a new generation of writers at his *mardis* including Valéry, Gide and Claudel. He died in 1898, at the age of 56. The cause was a laryngial spasm; it cut off his breathing and suffocated him instantly, the way one silences the sounds of a bagpipe at the end of a piece.

Studies of Mallarmé's poetry have appeared steadily since his death, including important books by Albert Thibaudet, Emilie Noulet, Charles Mauron, Wallace Fowlie and Robert Greer Cohn. By common consent, the task of writing the life of the poet was left in the hands of the indefatigable French surgeon and man of letters Henri Mondor. He published, in the 1940s, six books on Mallarmé; and for thirty years students and scholars of Mallarmé learned most of what they knew from three of them. Mondor's *Vie de Mallarmé* is an 800-page saturation biography stuffed with quotations from the letters and with lively information on the backgrounds of Symbolism and Naturalism. In *Propos sur la Poésie*, Mondor collected in a slim volume the central passages from Mallarmé's letters on the theory and practice of poetry. And the Pléiade edition of Mallarmé's Complete Works collected every literary effort in 1,600 pages, with the exception of one important essay on Manet and Impressionism. (Its original French text has been lost.)



Mondor was a one-man Mallarmé industry until he died in 1962. (His biography of the poet has never been translated into English.) No one undertook another life until Gordon Millan, a Scottish scholar at the University of Strathclyde, recently produced *A Throw of the Dice*. Millan has given us a well-informed and workman-like study in 350 pages. He carries out the pledge made in his introduction to restore the emphasis to Mallarmé's life and published poetry in preference to the more fashionable subjects of his poetic theories and his unfinished works. Millan has been able to draw on new materials from the correspondence, from documents assembled by his mentor Carl Paul Barbier, and particularly from an unpublished private diary by Henri de Régnier, one of Mallarmé's young disciples. We needed this full-length study in English.

Brushing aside Flaubert's famous growl to Louise Colet that one must live like a bourgeois and think like a demi-god, Millan twice insists, at the beginning and the end, that Mallarmé's life and work are "an organic whole" and "truly inseparable." Better this effort to see the man whole than dubious speculations about alienation, schizophrenia and disabling contradictions. Yet Millan's nine chapters partly belie his categorical thesis. For Mallarmé lived for thirty years with a split down the middle of his life between teaching, for him a livelihood without rewards, and poetry, a full-fledged secular religion with solemn rituals and bouts of despair and moments of ineffable vision.

Verlaine called him an accursed poet, but Mallarmé also enjoyed considerable protection in the Ministry of Education and in the literary marketplace. And this poet, whose name means "ill-armed," who called for the suppression of personality in submission to art, displayed a highly complex temperament. He was ambitious for his literary work, but in so meticulous a way as to be clumsy. Some of his letters on purity and obscurity in poetry may sound like the mouthings of a charlatan, but they were unquestionably sincere.

In a letter written when he was 25, this poet so fixated on words (once, during a depression, he knelt down and prayed to the language itself) seems to confound his own aestheticism. "I think that to be truly a man, to be by nature capable of thought, one must think with one's body, which creates a full, harmonious thought, like those violin strings vibrating directly with their hollow wooden box." Above all,

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Mallarmé's relation to the act of writing was highly physical. Millan reports an incident of anxiety and depression in 1869 that took the form of hysteria not about the blank page, but about writing with a pen. His doctor instructed him to dictate his letters, and he explained to a friend that "the thought of a pen writing through my will, even if it is by the hand of another, brings back my palpitations."

Millan does not establish an organic unity of life and work, of aestheticism and physicality, in Mallarmé's case. As I shall argue, even the uncertain unity of Mallarmé's writings eludes him. But Millan does better in dealing with the major poems. The extended commentary comes first as preparation; then Millan gives the French text and his English translation as if he really expects us to read the lines aloud in one version or another, preferably both. This respect for the integrity of the poem redeems many of the book's weaknesses, not the least its regrettable wanness, which misses the intensity at the heart of Mallarmé's universe.

Millan's writing is frequently at fault. It is characterized by awkward sentences, a weakness for cliché and a misplaced urge to anticipate events to come. He never flashes a sentence so incisive as Sartre's on Mallarmé: "More and better than Nietzsche, Mallarmé lived through the death of God." Millan's blurred instinct for detail leads him to throw into the notes at the back of the book important details about Mallarmé's finances, and about his feeling for language. And he makes periodic attempts to introduce into Mallarmé's thinking "the presence/absence paradox" without explaining this dubious borrowing from deconstructionist criticism.

Millan's biography will serve many readers who have little French, but it does not displace the crabbed, craggy mountain of a biography by Mondor, where one can revel in the bursting anecdotal background of the period. Mondor registers the importance of the poet Laforgue, unmentioned by Millan. And Mondor has a good nose for stories. (To wit: Mallarmé told Valéry one day that he thought he had seen Baudelaire in his last year riding on the upper deck of a three-horse omnibus, wearing a top hat, and holding, perhaps, "The Painter of Modern Life," his essay on Constantin Guys.) The best complement in English to Millan's biography is the selection of Mallarmé's letters translated by Rosemary Lloyd in 1988. Our new Plutarch, whenever he or she arrives, could do worse than to include in a modern *Parallel Lives* a pairing of the gentle Mallarmé with the aggressive Rimbaud.

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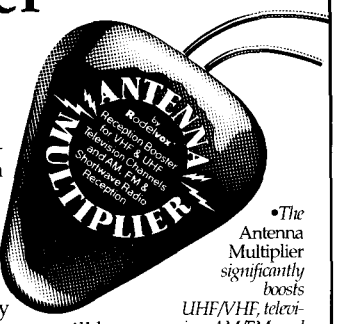
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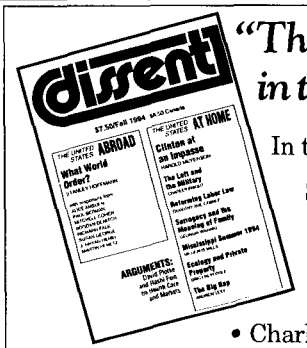

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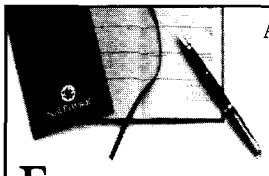

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so extreme and so important a figure in literature that it is important to get things right about him. There has been too much fuss made about the period of his youth in the provinces, when he turned to language as to a new religion. His major personal and artistic crisis occurred in the '90s, when he achieved fame and entered his 50s. By then he had become fully aware of the two poles of his talent. The Complete Works contains fifty pages of serious poetry and 100 pages of "occasional verse"—postal addresses written on letters in the form of rhymed quatrains (and actually delivered by conscientious mail carriers), ingenious inscriptions for ladies' fans and New Year's gifts, and similar froth.

At this juncture Mallarmé had also fallen into what looked like contradictions in his pronouncements about his art. He seemed to be calmly working both sides of the street. Which has priority, speech or writing? The final words of an interview in 1891 are categorical: "Basically the world is made to end up in a book." But following his life-long attraction to everything theatrical and performed, Mallarmé also insisted that "nothing will remain without being spoken." What about the question of naming things in poetry? In 1886 he stated that to say the word "flower" releases the pure musical notion or idea absent from any real bouquet; yet five years later, in one of the major definitions of symbolism, he pronounced that "*to name* an object is to suppress three-quarters of the poem's pleasure, which consists in divining little by little: suggest, that's the dream." Mallarmé, as much as Whitman, contained multitudes. But the accumulation of such statements leads to a certain precariousness.

The greatest crisis was formal. Following Baudelaire, Mallarmé remained faithful in his poems to the conventions of French versification and also wrote prose poems, his own and his translations of Poe's verse. But something happened to make him reconsider his own position. After the death of Hugo in 1885, as if his mere presence had held back the flood, free verse made its appearance in French through translations of Whitman, through poems by Rimbaud and Laforgue, and through works by a flock of young poets. They more or less declared themselves Symbolists in 1886, and made *La Vogue* their house review. They were all friends and admirers of Mallarmé, and they expected approbation from the master. But free verse was not Mallarmé's natural impulse. In a lecture given at Oxford and at Cambridge in 1891, Mallarmé raised a warning finger: "*On a touché au vers.*" Verse has been tampered with.

How would he react? Would he encourage or resist the innovation? As the leader of the new school, would he write free verse himself, in the way that, say, Stravinsky would finally succumb to serial composition? Mallarmé's most challenging decisions came at the height of his fame, in 1892, just after he had published *Vers et prose*, his first book for the general public. His response was a masterful maneuver, neither capitulation nor attack, in which he discovered in himself new resources. Millan conveys little sense of this crucial moment, which was so important for Mallarmé and for the development of European poetry.

Mallarmé produced, for a start, a few poems that strike a rare balance between his most obscure and forbidding style and his light-hearted occasional verse. For a banquet of poets at which he was asked to preside in early 1893, he composed "Salut," a toast in the form of a sonnet. Every line refers directly or metaphorically to the literal scene of an older poet standing, champagne glass in hand, at the head of a tumultuous banquet table like a captain standing on the prow of his ship in stormy seas. The analogy of the dangerous sea voyage is both an elaborate joke and a serious literary device for making a toast to great poems still to be written. (The translation that follows is mine.)

Rien, cette écume, vierge vers
A ne désigner que la coupe;
Telle loin se noie une troupe
De sirènes mainte à l'envers.

Nous naviguons, ô mes divers
Amis, moi déjà sur la poupe
Vous l'avant fastueux qui coupe
Le flot de foudres et d'hivers.

Une ivresse belle m'engage
Sans craindre même son tangage
De porter debout ce salut

Solitude, récif étoile
A n'importe ce qui valut
Le blanc souci de notre toile.

Mere froth, these virgin verses
Cut like glass to hold the void
Where mermaids gambol to avoid
The drowning scenes my eye rehearses.

We set our sails, my loyal friends,
I standing on the wintry poop
To watch young poets on the prow usurp
The pomp this thundering night portends;

Tipsy on a tossing deck
Yet fearless of pitch I now elect
To make this stern free-standing toast

Solitude, or reef, or star
To lines our empty sheets disbar
From sounding at this gay repast.

At the end of his life, Mallarmé chose "Salut" to open the collection of all his poetry. He realized that in this poem he had fused the full range of his gifts, from

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the down-to-earth to the ethereal. And in 1895, when the newspaper *Le Figaro* conducted a survey on free verse, Mallarmé answered by giving not a statement, not a free verse experiment, but a playful sonnet composed of seven-syllable lines. "Toute l'âme résumée" treats the action of smoking—breathing, smoke rings, combustion, ash—as an analogy for poetic creation. The last two lines restate and parody the whole Symbolist aesthetic: "Anything too clear will blow away/ Your entire literary play."

But on one occasion, almost as if he foresaw his death, Mallarmé accepted the challenge of free verse, and produced an utterly unprecedented work independent of any known genre or form. "A Throw of the Dice" lays out on eleven double-page spreads fragments of verse and prose in different fonts, so as to form a flowchart and a score for a live reading by many voices. The virtually sculpted lines seem to trace the narrative of an enigmatic thought doomed to shipwreck. Mallarmé creates, aurally and visually, the arresting interference and the booming override of an echo chamber. He observes, in his preface, that "this experiment engages, with uncertain results, in quests particular and dear to our time—free verse and the prose poem." The traditionalist outperformed, in one try, the most obstreperous avant-gardists.

Mallarmé's third response to the vexed state of poetry was to write, in 1896, "Crise de Vers," his most dense and important essay, to evaluate the situation. The allusion to *crise de nerfs*, or nervous seizure, was inescapable. The essay belongs among a handful of major documents in modern literature. The exalted tone sounds religious. "We are witnessing, as finale to this century, but not like the previous one, great shifts, far from the public eye: a trembling and even a tearing of the veil of the temple." He is talking about poetry. Mallarmé welcomes the "polymorphous" rhythms of free verse, refers to the blank spaces and the "total word" of his own "A Throw of the Dice," and asks that poetry reclaim from music the purity and sonorousness that are its own original properties.

In these three concrete responses to the "exquisite crisis" that Mallarmé discerned in literature during the '90s, he was taking also one further and more subtle step: he was allowing a glimpse of his own ultimate project in poetry. He had declared, in his early 20s, that he worked by indirection and suggestion, and that Poe was his master in obtaining singleness of effect in a poem. Now he set down unmistakable hints about an almost heretical goal, and it had to do with the nature of language.

In "Crisis in Verse," Mallarmé deplores the fact that the post-Babel diversity of languages in the world deprives any one of them of authority, of the possibility of offering perfectly expressive words. In French, for instance, a certain perverseness has given to *jour*, or day, a dark sound, and to *nuit*, or night, a bright sound. Something must be amiss. Then he adds a crucial comment on this lapse from ideal expressiveness in language: "But, we must remember that if we had the ideal language, *verse would not exist*—for verse redeems the sins of individual languages by providing their superior complement." At nearly the same time, in a letter to Gide, Mallarmé explained the layout of "A Throw of the Dice" by insisting on the appearance of the work on the page: "The rhythm of a sentence about an act or even about an object, makes no sense unless it imitates them, unless by its outline on paper ... it renders some aspect of them."

In these three places, Mallarmé reveals what he believed to be the true purpose of poetry. It is to rectify the arbitrary and often perverse results of there being many languages and no perfectly expressive one. In the inconclusive *Cratylus*, Plato's discussion revolves around the question of whether names of things are natural or conventional; and the German dramatist Lessing recapitulates and decides the entire discussion in a sentence: "Poetry must try to raise its arbitrary signs to natural: that is how it differs from prose and becomes poetry." Lessing anticipates Mallarmé's project in which the studied visual arrangements and cultivated musicality of poetry can introduce a higher onomatopoeia, a new Cratylism into language, to reach beyond the arbitrary conventions of ordinary language. Through a renewed fusion with sound and appearance, poetry can surpass the limits and the contingencies of any national tongue and attain a higher form of speech.

It is a serious mistake to permit deconstructionists and other theorists of language to coopt Mallarmé into the view that language is the sole reality, excluding any external world, and that literature is an arbitrary, authorless construction of signs. On the contrary, Mallarmé sought a seamless correspondence between language and reality in the form of poetry, a universal language directly incorporating the senses and the referential world into "a total word." This near mystical vision of a universal poetic language resembles the discovery of colors for vowels by Rimbaud and the casting off by Khlebnikov of the exigencies of Russian and his invention of *zaum*, or "beyond sense."

In an undertaking close to magic and practicing some of its rituals and mysteries, Mallarmé wished to invoke—almost to convoke—the real world by discovering the privileged speech of poetry. It is in this context that he spoke of "ceding the initiative to words" and in the next sentence of "eliminating chance." He sought the true names of things, not the idle play of signifiers. He would surpass the painful deficiencies of *jour* and *nuit*. And unlike Rimbaud and Khlebnikov, Mallarmé remained modest in his Faustian undertaking and good-humored in his daily dealings. The secret life of his mind was intense beyond our knowing.

If poetry is not the mere creature of language but its redeemer, we have good reason to listen again to the two best-known anecdotes about Mallarmé, both omitted by Millan. Degas once sought out Mallarmé at Berthe Morisot's house to complain about the impossible art of sonnet writing. "I spent the whole day on a sonnet without going anywhere. But I have ideas coming out of my ears—too many ideas." Mallarmé didn't try to console the painter: "You don't make sonnets out of ideas, Degas. You make them out of words." And at another gathering Mallarmé was approached by Debussy, who was twenty years younger, with the information that he was setting "Afternoon of a Faun" to music. "Well, Debussy," said the poet, "I thought I had already set it to music."

ROGER SHATTUCK, who teaches at Boston University, is completing a book on forbidden knowledge.

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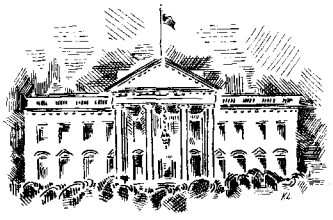
WASHINGTON DIARIST

Twin pique

TNR READERS MAY THINK THAT every nook and cranny of Charles Murray and Richard J. Herrnstein's book *The Bell Curve* has been thoroughly examined. Perhaps. Regrettably, though, I have something to add. I want to address just one "finding" of the book—that, as a group, "Ashkenazi Jews of European origin" have higher I.Q.s than other ethnic groups. Two weeks ago my colleague Leon Wieseltier wrote that he was "repulsed" to read this section of the book ("The Lowerers," October 31). His cogent reasoning made me embarrassed at my own first reaction—which was not repulsion at all but, in fact, a ticklish sense of delight. With a mischievous grin, I brandished a smoking Xerox of page 275 of *The Bell Curve* around the office, eventually pinning it on my bulletin board next to an old *New Yorker* cartoon. It was a moment of visceral chauvinist sentiment, reminiscent of the pride I took in learning that Lauren Bacall or Pissarro or Rod Carew were co-religionists. Of course, after the initial guilty pleasure always came the realization that taking such pride in those guys meant also taking special shame from a whole gamut of embarrassments, from Meir Kahane to Olivia Newton-John (her grandfather was the Jewish Nobel Prize-winning physicist Max Born) to Richard Herrnstein. Similarly, I can't put any stock in *The Bell Curve*'s "finding" about Jews unless I put stock in its other findings. That's something I'm not prepared to do, certainly not unless I read the first 274 pages.

I DON'T WANT TO PRONOUNCE Murray's politics of identity totally worthless, though. In some areas, my own identity attunes me to certain little-recognized stereotypes and prejudices that pervade our culture, where I feel a tad more political correctness would be of service. Besides being Jewish, I am also, among other things, an identical twin (though I prefer to say I *have* an identical twin, since the verb "to be" can connote a summation of the entirety of who I am.) Multicultural sensitivity has alerted us, for better and for worse, to racism, sexism, age-ism, able-ism, look-ism and more. But what about twin-ism? It's nauseating how many sitcoms use the shopworn laugh-getter of Tweedledum-Tweedledee twins—twins who dress alike, who speak in unison, who bear rhyming or alliterative names, who are essentially interchangeable. (I won't even get into the overused "evil twin" plot device on soap operas and prime-time dramas.) Movies about twins invariably portray them as freaks or deviants: *Dead Ringers*, with Jeremy Irons as two psychotic gynecologists; *The Krays*, about twin psychotic gangsters; the bathetic *Twins* of a few years back, starring Danny DeVito and Arnold Schwarzenegger, which plied on the ridiculous and long-enduring myth that twins can communicate through ESP, or that one feels the other's pain. In all these depictions, twins function exclusively as a unit, never as individuals with different character traits, thoughts or even roles in the plot. Just as Hollywood is realizing that black actors can play doctors or action heroes who just "happen" to be black—whose race isn't an issue in the film—so we need cultural depictions of characters who just "happen" to be twins. I know my brother would agree.



ONE OF THE MOST INSIPID PRACTITIONERS of P.C. is film reviewer Jane Horwitz of *The Washington Post*, a.k.a. "The Family Filmgoer," who gives a movie a thumbs-up for any traces of social do-goodism. Blatant self-esteem messages for girls, the use of sign language, passing references to Buddhist philosophy—all these earn a movie bonus points. But behind Ms. Filmgoer's veneer of touchy-feely liberalism lurks a reactionary premise: the point of her column, like its *New York Times* counterpart, "Taking the Children," is to evaluate films not on artistic merit but on their suitability for youngsters. Appropriately, Ms. Filmgoer displays the intellect of a preadolescent. She writes under the patronizing assumption that kids need to be shielded from on-screen sex and violence. Of one movie she writes: "Filled with profanity and violence, plus brief instances of nudity, drug use and cruelty to animals." Of another: "Highly explicit sex and profanity make this tough to recommend for all but the oldest teens." Other nibblets include a revoltingly smug "P.S. FOR KIDS," as though she imagines 10-year-olds racing past Calvin and Hobbes to lap up her tidbits of wisdom. These addenda address kids as though they were stroke victims. To wit: "In 1987 Steve Martin starred in *Roxanne*, about a guy with an incredibly huge nose. It's funny. You could rent it," she writes. Thanks for the tip, grandma.

LIKE MOST ADVOCATES OF RECORD labels, video game ratings and other forms of watered-down censorship, Ms. Filmgoer is blind to the ability of children to criticize what they see and hear. Of *Natural Born Killers*, she writes: "Stone's condemnation of the media and the criminal justice system is pretty clear, but his presentation may be too sophisticated for most teens." If any reviewer considers Oliver Stone sophisticated, then it is the kids who should be accompanying *her* to the movies. Ms. Filmgoer values a movie if it offers a "lesson" or "message" that tots can easily and uncritically absorb. Child psychologists urge parents not to talk baby talk to their toddlers, since it underestimates and infantilizes them; Ms. Filmgoer's columns are the journalistic equivalent of baby talk. It is only through exposure to sophisticated (and sometimes disturbing) films that kids can learn to develop critical faculties. The last thing they need is a simple moral message from Hollywood.

ANTI-AESTHETIC APPROACHES TO art are effectively demolished in Harold Bloom's *The Western Canon*. But what has attracted attention—and gripes—has been the book's thirty-seven-page appendix. In it, the Yale professor reels off authors and works of Western literature (with a smattering of philosophy, history and criticism) that he considers the immortal accomplishments of our culture. Bloom warns that the appendix is meant as a guide, not the exhaustive membership list of an exclusive club. "I turn to my lists," he writes, "hoping that literate survivors will find some authors and books among them that they have not yet encountered and will garner the rewards that only canonical literature affords." Fine. But Bloom surely is aware deliberately downplaying something only guarantees it extra attention. (Just ask Charles Murray, who whined that only twenty pages of his book deal with genes and race.) For me, plumbing Bloom's appendix has become an entertaining time-whiler, turning up all sorts of curiosities. Which last name appears most in the canon? "Wright," with five entries (Charles, Jay, James, Judith, Richard). How many Portuguese authors from the age of Dante to Goethe? Two: Luis de Camoëns and António Ferreira. And I can't neglect one discovery: that, of all the writers Bloom cites, based on inspection and a conservative estimate, at least sixty-eight were Jews.

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
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Barnum Was Right

A couple of weeks ago, the Hartford (Conn.) school district achieved a doubtful distinction. It became the first to turn over the management of its entire system to a private, for-profit company. The five-year contract that the district signed with Education Alternatives, Inc. (EAI) gives the company authority to run Hartford's 32 schools and control the district's $200 million budget. But if the people in Hartford had paid any attention to what was going on in Baltimore, Maryland, they might have had second thoughts.

"Did someone intentionally commit a fraud, trying to do EAI a favor?"

EAI is in the third year of a five-year contract in Baltimore, where it manages nine schools. The company was brought in to improve student achievement. But as the *Baltimore Sun* revealed ("EAI schools' test scores fall short," October 18, 1994), the test scores in EAI schools have declined for two years, while the scores in other Baltimore schools have risen. And, the *Sun* says, this decline has led to calls to pull the plug on EAI. (Maybe hiring someone who ran one of the Baltimore schools where scores improved would have been a better bet for Hartford.)

There is also outrage about the way the test scores have been handled. In June, the Baltimore school district released some partial scores from EAI schools and claimed the scores showed that EAI was "on track." But when the district finally released scores for all the Baltimore schools at a "stealth" press conference in mid-October, EAI schools looked pretty sick in comparison with the rest. Furthermore, it turned out that June's scores were not even accurate—they made the performance at EAI schools look better than it was.

What's the story? Why were the citywide scores held back until October? And why were the EAI scores made to look better than they were? Superintendent Walter Amprey says it was a clerical error. An editorial in the *Baltimore Sun* (October 19, 1994) suggests another possibility: "Did someone intentionally commit a fraud, trying to do EAI a favor?" As the *Sun* points out,

> When city school leaders initially touted alleged improvements at EAI schools in a June press conference, ...[EAI] was trying to get selected to take over the failing Hartford (Conn.) school system. For EAI, it was a critical contract.

The *Sun* thinks these questions about the test results need to be answered by an independent investigation because Superintendent Amprey has sacrificed his credibility by becoming "too publicly identified as an EAI cheerleader."

And what about the changes in the "control group" of schools? This is a group of eight non-EAI schools carefully selected to match EAI schools in student composition and achievement and therefore useful for comparison purposes. Now, three high-achieving schools have been dropped from the control group and three low-achieving schools added—a surefire way of making student achievement in EAI schools look much better. If you want to win, just change the rules of the game in the middle.

There are people who look at EAI's performance and say, "Yes, there are questions; there are problems. But the schools are in bad shape so why not give EAI's program a try? Then you evaluate it. If it works, you keep it; if it doesn't, you get rid of it."

That sounds pretty sane. But if you look at the contract the Hartford school board signed with EAI, you have to wonder whether it will be possible to get an independent evaluation: "EAI and the Board may mutually contract for independent evaluation of the project."

Mutually. What happens if EAI says, "Well, we have our internal evaluation system. We're satisfied that things in Hartford are 'on track,' and we don't think an evaluation is necessary"? Or "We don't like your independent evaluator. You need to take the one we've chosen"? The contract language seems to give EAI the right to exercise veto power over the evaluation process, so the board has given away the only tool it has to get independent information about how well the project is succeeding.

Why can't the board and the superintendent evaluate the success of the project? In theory, they are the watchdogs for the public. But in a case like this, where the decision to hire EAI was controversial, the issue becomes a political one. And they are likely to say, "I've brought this company in. If it bombs, what will become of my credibility?" That's what has happened in Baltimore, where, as the *Sun* editorial says, people can no longer trust the superintendent to tell the truth about EAI. There is nothing in the situation in Hartford to make it any different.

Hartford's decision illustrates once again how right P.T. Barnum was: "There's a sucker born every minute." It's too bad that Hartford's kids will be the ones to suffer.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1994 by Albert Shanker.

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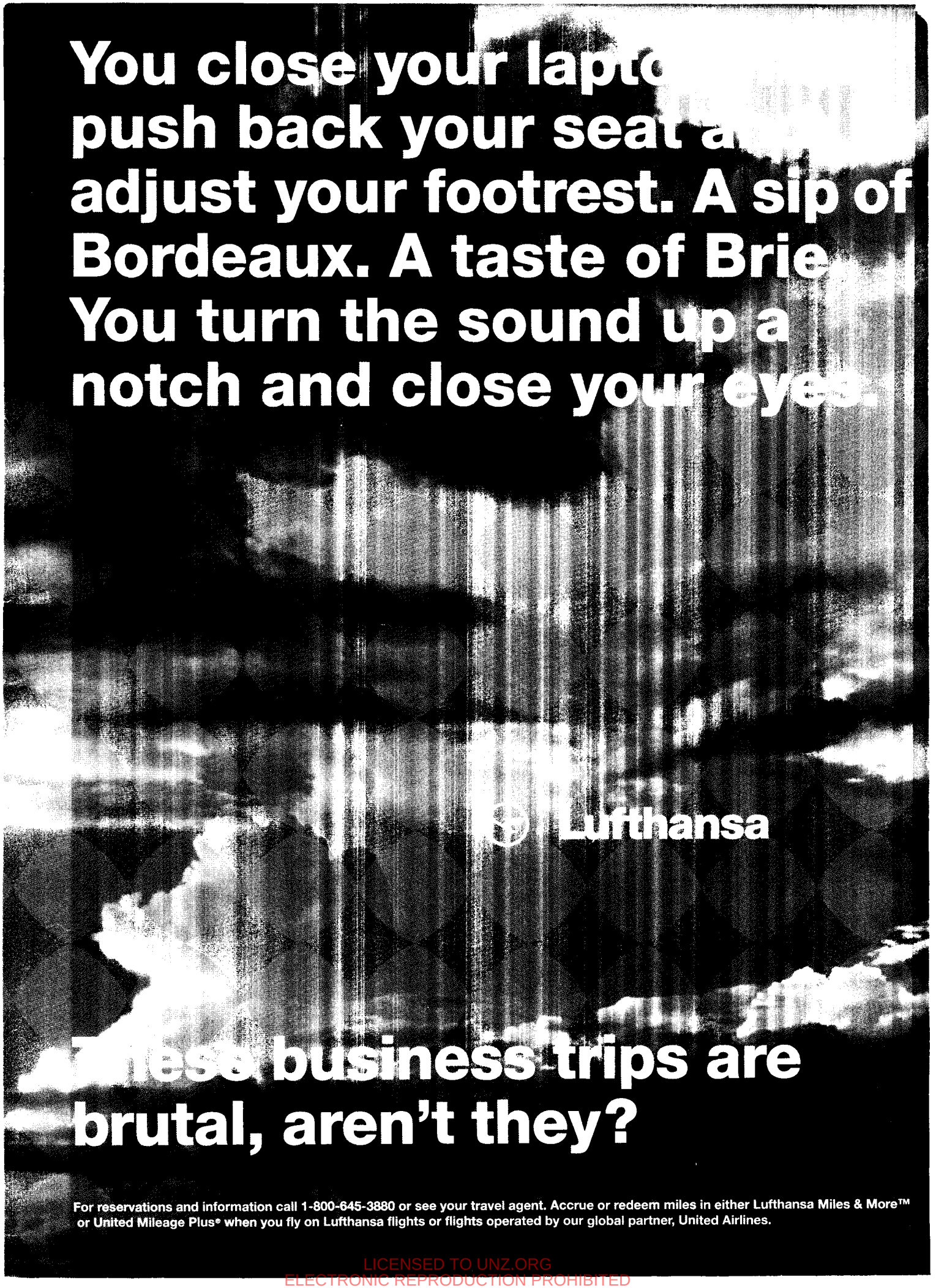
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